

WALSALL MOURNS TERROR VICTIMS

Report by Heather Large

SADDLERS fans and communities throughout Walsall have been paying tribute this week to the family devastated by the Tunisia beach massacre.

It follows a stream of mourners who have turned out to lay flowers, shirts, scarves and messages outside Banks's Stadium after three Walsall supporters from the same family were murdered.

Devoted Saddlers fans Joel Richards, his uncle Adrian Evans and grandfather Patrick Evans, were killed when a gunman opened fire on sunbathers in the resort of Sousse. Schoolboy Owen Richards, Joel's brother, was the only survivor of the family trip.

A shrine has been set up outside the stadium and heartbroken friends and colleagues have been having their say about the victims, after they were named among around 30 Britons believed to have been slaughtered by Kalashnikov-wielding student Seifeddine Rezgui, last Friday.

A national one minute's silence will be taking place tomorrow, Friday, at midday, to commemorate all the victims, as announced by Prime Minister David Cameron.

Distraught

Sandwell council worker Mr Evans and his father, 78-year-old Patrick, and 19-year-old football referee Joel, both of Wednesbury, were among the 38 people murdered in the horror attack. Among those paying tribute were school friends of Joel who attended the University of Worcester. Ross Adomo, aged 19, from Great Barr, said: "He was such a nice, bright lad. He always had a smile on his face, he never had a bad word to say about anyone."

James McMulkin, 16, from Great Barr, is one of Owen's best friends and went to the same school, Stuart Bathurst Catholic High School in Wednesbury.

"It is a massive shock for everyone. We were good friends, a few of us have been friends since we were young. I have spoken to him, he has sent me texts, he's back in the country. Obviously he's completely distraught. We are praying this doesn't change him as a person because he is a lovely lad."

Family friend Helen Probert, who runs a beauty salon in Wednesbury, posted a photograph on Facebook of Adrian, Patrick and Joel, taken as they jetted off on their holiday. She said: "It's absolutely heart-breaking. They were very close, they did so much together."

"Joel was one of the most kindest, beautiful souls I have met. His mother Suzy is absolutely devastated to have lost him as well as her father and brother. Her whole world has fallen apart," said Miss Probert, who has known the family for many years.



Three generations killed - this picture was posted on Facebook by friend Helen Probert, of Patrick Evans, Joel Richards and Adrian Evans



The carpet of tributes gathered outside Banks's Stadium in Bescot Drive



Adrian's friend, David Brookes of Willenhall



Survivor, Owen Richards, 16

At Sandwell Council where Mr Evans, aged 49, who lived in Bilston, had worked since 1983 a book of condolence has been made available for staff to sign. Assistant chief executive Melanie Dudley said: "The whole organisation is in mourning. The mood is very sombre."

University student Joel, aged 19, from Wednesbury, was a keen sportsman, playing Gaelic football and also being a referee.

He attended Stuart Bathurst in Wednesbury until it came to A-Levels. Headteacher Jeremy Harris was among those who paid tribute to Joel and his relatives at the stadium. He said: "He was a highly intelligent young man. He was a very able sportsman, he excelled in the classroom and the sports field. He was the kind of student everyone respected. He was really well-mannered and would help anybody. The fact he was head boy was fitting to what people

felt about him." He added they would now be offering support to his brother Owen - who had just done his GCSE's and is getting ready for the next stage in his life - as well as the rest of the family.

The 16 year-old is believed to have been grazed by a gunshot wound, but then comforted the injured despite witnessing the deaths of his relatives.

Mr Harris said: "I would imagine he is finding it very difficult to consider the future and what he is going to do at the moment."

Joel qualified as a football referee in September 2011, at just 16. The next year he became chairman of the Birmingham County FA Youth Council. Chief Executive, Chad Ehlertsen commented: "No job was too small for Joel and he was always looking to support the development of others and create opportunities for others to

get involved in the game. Everyone who knew Joel knows his infectious smile, if he smiled, you smiled. He was an extremely talented referee and incredible young leader with the world at his feet."

Dozens of football shirts have been placed on the ground by the main reception to the Banks's Stadium, with several asking the question 'Why'. David Brookes attended Walsall FC games with Sandwell Council worker Adrian and the rest of his family. They had been friends for more than 20 years and Adrian, who he knew as 'Ade', would regularly organise trips abroad for friends. One included going to Prague and then onto the World Cup in Germany. The 47-year-old of Hawkswell Drive, Willenhall, hailed the family. He said: "They were just brilliant."

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CHARITY

Heights of fundraising on display at gallery

FUNDRAISERS are going to great heights for charity - abselling down an iconic Black Country building.

Thrill-seekers will be scaling down Walsall New Art Gallery this Saturday in aid of Walsall Healthcare Charity - with more than a dozen people signed up.

It takes place at 10am and 2pm and participants include Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust chief executive Richard Kirby.

To make a donation call Youla in fundraising on 01922 656464 or email youla.stevens@walsallhealthcare.nhs.uk

LEISURE

Skate park work to start next year

WORK on a new skate park in Walsall is poised to start next spring after plans received the go-ahead. The sports facility is earmarked for Rushall Playing Fields and formal plans were submitted to Walsall Council earlier this year.

In a report to councillors, Laura Terry, area manager for Brownhills, Pelsall, Rushall and Sheffield said work is expected to take place next spring.

The proposal was made in response to a plea from young people in the area who took part in a consultation.

BLAZE

Workers evacuated after fire breaks out

MORE than 20 staff were evacuated at a recycling firm in Willenhall after a compactor containing around six tons of paper caught fire. Fire crews from Willenhall and Bilston were called to the blaze in a yard at DS Smith Recycling, East Acre, at around 1.45pm on Monday.

Watch commander Chris Hill, from Willenhall fire station, said: "The machine shreds paper and compacts it into large bales. The fire was inside the compactor."

"We used the on-site machinery to empty it out. There was a large amount of it on fire - around 15 to 20 per cent. We are still investigating the cause of the fire."

INSIDE

ON THE ROAD AS WORK ENDS



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Milly shows real zest for drink offer



Milly Cooksey, aged 11

Hundreds of cartons of orange juice were handed out to schoolchildren in Walsall to mark Chabeel Week in the Sikh community.

Volunteers from national charity, Sikh Relief, visited King Charles Primary School, in Wilkes Avenue, Bentley, to explain about the week and what it means.

Chabeel is a Punjabi word referring to a sweet, cool non-alcoholic drink.

During this week, Sikhs will get together in their local communities and

hand out cold drinks to passers-by to remember the sacrifice of their fifth Guru, Arjan Dev ji.

June is one of the hottest months in India, and Sikhs all over the country are seen distributing free chabeel drinks as an act of service.

Drinks are served to all, irrespective of their religious background.

Serving of chabeel also represents the idea of Chardi Kala – eternal optimism, in the Sikh community. Four volunteers visited the school in Walsall on Monday

to hand out around 370 drinks. Jess Kaur, of Willenhall, was among them. The 43-year-old, who has been volunteering for more than two years, said: “We explained to pupils what it was all about.

“One of our volunteers gave a talk and they saw a YouTube video.

“This is the first time something like this has ever been done through our charity.

“The pupils were so happy. They really listened and some asked questions.”

Singer's despair as Elvis gear leaves the building

AN Elvis impersonator is all shook up after his van with £10,000 worth of costumes and wigs inside was stolen from outside his Black Country home.

Andy James was forced to cancel a charity gig in Wolverhampton at the last minute but he has vowed to honour a gig in Brierley Hill at the weekend.

The costumes were all tailor made for him in Las Vegas by the firm who made the real Elvis Presley's stage jumpuits, each one knocking him back a cool £2,500.

The opportunist thieves also made off with all his lighting and sound equipment, although left a £1,000 guitar by the side of the road.

Semi-retired businessman Andy is kicking himself over the loss of his performance gear as he left the keys in the van's ignition so the insurance company will not pay out. The total loss comes to £35,000.

Registration

The theft, on Monday last week, happened as he and sound engineer Chris Hayward were packing the white Citroen Relay to go to London where 50-year-old Andy was due to play at a 1,000-seater venue that night.

He said: “It was crammed with all my stuff and just as we were about to leave, Chris popped back to my flat to use the loo. I went with him to let him in and returned just two minutes later to find the van gone.

“My immediate reaction was that I'd parked it somewhere else but when I looked down and saw the skid marks from where they'd driven off, it hit me what had happened. I felt sick.”

Instinctively Andy jumped into his own car to give chase but had no idea where the thieves had gone. Worse still, when he phoned the police from his car, he realised he did not know the registration number of the van because he had not had it for long.

“I was devastated. Around 70 to 80 per cent of my work is for charity, I certainly don't do it for the money. The first thing I had to do was make



Elvis impersonator Andy James, left with a belt and guitar

the call to the London gig and obviously they didn't take it too well.

“I was able to give the police the van details when I got home but by then the thieves were well away.”

The Elvis fanatic, from Rosehill, Willenhall, found one of his guitars in the car park outside his flat.

He said: “I can only guess that they initially just went for the guitar – one of my neighbours saw a black guy wearing a baseball cap with the guitar walking across the car park – but his mate must have spotted the keys still in the ignition and called him back.

“Everyone I know thinks what's happened is disgraceful but there's



Andy in one of the stolen suits, worth thousands

no one to blame but myself.” Andy has been a fan of The King since 1977 when he was moved by the enormous nostalgia surrounding the star's death.

He started a tribute act 15 years ago, focusing on Elvis's early 1970s hits. Among the stolen items were four new high-collared jump suits. “I'd not even had a chance to try them on,” he said. Also gone was £10,000 of gig lighting.

His Elvis work is a far cry from his former life as boss of the mobile pooch pampering business Dial A Dog Wash which he initially started in the Walsall area before launching into the franchise market. He said:

“The tribute act is just a hobby because I'm such a massive Elvis fan but it's not just one man and his speaker. I've got all the gear and I get a great buzz out of doing it.”

Andy refuses to be beaten by his misfortune and was in Liverpool and Leicester since the theft, trying out new stage equipment. He has also ordered new wigs from America over the internet.

He is hoping to keep his promise to perform at the re-opening of The Raven pub in Wood Lane, Brierley Hill. “They're rushing the hair over from America, and with a bit of luck I should have everything in time,” he said.

Family tell of panic on the beach as gun is fired

A FAMILY from Walsall ran for their lives from the beach in Tunisia close to where gunman Seifeddine Rezgui murdered holidaymakers.

Ian Thompson and his son Ryan relived the horror of hearing gunshots as they swam in the sea and ordered drinks from a snack bar. Nine members of the family were on holiday in Sousse, including Ian's two daughters, sons in law and grandsons.

They were five days into the trip and were staying just three hotels along the beach from where the attack which left 38 dead took place.

Ian, aged 55, of Tantarra Street, Walsall, had been swimming in the sea just 10 minutes before Rezgui's reign of terror began. He was walking back up to his Abou Sofiane hotel with wife Michelle when the shooting started.

Son Ryan was at the snack bar when the first sounds of gunshots filled the air.

The 18-year-old swimming instructor said: “I heard a popping noise but I convinced myself it wasn't anything major. I thought maybe it was a speed-boat but then I saw there weren't any boats. No-one knew what was going on.”

Ian said: “People were flocking off the beach in a panic. Within half an hour we learned people had been shot. There were body bags on the beach. It's devastating. I feel so sorry for everyone, not just the Walsall fans.” Ian and Ryan landed back in the UK on Sunday.

Work scheme is threatened

A PROGRAMME that helps disadvantaged youngsters in the West Midlands step onto the career ladder may have to be axed due to a lack of funding.

The City Builders scheme has given access to the property industry to more than 150 students from across the region. The Birmingham-based academy has hosted students from schools including Walsall Academy and Pool Hayes, Willenhall.

The project has been operating successfully for three years.

The first and the one under most threat is the popular week long Academy, which costs around £6,000 to run.

Benefits changes advice is on offer

RESIDENTS are being advised of available support during changes to the benefits system. A number of benefits are being phased out and replaced by a new one called Universal Credit.

It is now being rolled out for single people making a new claim, who would otherwise have been eligible to claim Jobseekers Allowance. Residents in Walsall are now being advised of council support for anyone who needs further advice. The 'money home job team' at the council is developing a universal credit web pagon the council website giving claimants information.

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Teenager is killed while attempting truck stunt

A TEENAGER died after he was electrocuted and set alight while climbing over a metal grid at a railway depot in Walsall, an inquest heard.

Ashley Matthews suffered 75 to 80 per cent burns after touching a cable with his foot at the Bescot depot on Thursday June 18.

An inquest, which opened last week at Smethwick Council House, heard the 19-year-old had been with a group of friends near Bescot Stadium.

Senior coroner's investigator, Bonita Poole, said: "He was climbing over a metal grid, trying to drop into one of the coal trucks at the depot."

"He touched a cable with his foot which gave him an electric shock. It set him on fire. He dropped on top of one of the coal trucks where he was found shortly afterwards."

Mr Matthews, of Leveson Street, Willenhall, was taken to Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital where he died in the early hours of the following morning.

Mrs Poole said he had suffered 75-80 per cent burns to the surface of his body and gave a provisional cause of death as 'extensive full thickness burns incompatible with life'.

Coroner Zafar Siddique adjourned the inquest at Sandwell Coroners Court until July 23. British Transport Police has launched an investigation although the circumstances are not believed to be suspicious.

Open garden day raises £700

AN OPEN garden day in Walsall has raised over £700 for charity.

The organiser, gardener John Quinn, of Fishley Close, Bloxwich thanked everybody who was involved in the event, which raised £712.

Last week the Walsall Chronicle published an article stating that the fundraising day would be held on Saturday whereas it was due to take place the following day, June 28.

We apologise to Mr Quinn and the three charities – Alzheimer's Society and Parkinson's Society, along with Pelsall Care Home – for any inconvenience and distress the error may have caused, and for any disruption caused to his neighbours, for people turning up on the wrong day.

Delays follow M5 closure after car fire

A CAR fire on the M5 in the Black Country forced the southbound side to close, causing delays.

Fire crews from Walsall and West Bromwich attended the blaze between the M6 and Junction 1 for West Bromwich on the M5 southbound at around 1.50pm last Wednesday. The driver, who was towing a caravan, noticed smoke coming from his vehicle but managed to pull onto the hard shoulder before it burst into flames.

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Backyard heralds new Billie's Brew



Austen Morgan, with Billie's Brew

A LEADING Brownhills brewer can blow its own trumpet after producing a limited edition ale for a Midlands jazz and blues festival.

Billie's Brew has been produced by Backyard Brewhouse. It has been named in honour of singer Billie Holiday, who would have been aged 100 this year.

The brewers were approached to create the drink as part of the annual Birmingham Jazz and Blues Festival being held next month.

Around 600 bottles of the smooth premier ale, which is 5.5 per cent alco-

hol content, have been made and will be available during the event at places across the city from July 3 to 12.

Backyard Brewhouse, which is based at the Gatehouse Trading Estate, were asked to come up with a tipple by Le Monde restaurant in Brindley Place. Most of the bottles, which are priced at £3, will be available at the restaurant.

The company already has more than 35 ales amongst its portfolio.

Managing director at Backyard, Austen Morgan, said the smooth ale would fit in with jazz and blues theme

and coincide with the celebration of Holiday's life. He said: "We were approached. They came up with the name and we came up with the beer and the artwork for it."

"We are really happy with it. The first delivery went into Le Monde's on Thursday of last week."

"It is nice to feel people out there are thinking about us when they come up with these ideas."

The brewers have been trading from Brownhills for seven years and have built up a strong reputation in the region.

Teacher gets life ban for sexual message to pupil

A TEACHER who sent a sexual message over social media to a pupil has been banned from classrooms for life.

Ian Jones admitted 'unacceptable professional conduct' following a string of allegations while working at Grace Academy in Darlaston.

The 40-year-old accepted he sent a pupil a message on Facebook saying 'I wanted to f*** you silly' to a professional conduct panel.

He also admitted posting messages on social media to her using the terms 'tosser' and 'big bum'. He accepted his actions were 'inappropriate', but denied they were 'sexually motivated'.

However, the panel found his conduct was 'sexually motivated'.

Bosses at the academy said he had worked there for five years between 2009 and 2014, without incident, and was assistant principal within the academy leadership team.

Following a professional conduct panel by the National College of Teaching Leadership where Mr Jones admitted a number of the allegations against him, it was recommended he be banned from the classroom for eight years.

Departure

But the recommendation was over-ruled by Alan Meyrick, deputy director of the NCTL, who imposed a lifetime ban.

Mr Meyrick said: "Mr Jones is guilty of a serious departure from the personal and professional elements of the teachers' standards, abuse of his position of trust and a violation of the rights of pupils. In addition his actions were sexually motivated."

The ban was imposed on behalf of Education Secretary Nicky Morgan. The findings of the panel, which heard the case in Coventry, said Mr Jones also talked to the girl about his marital difficulties and his sex life.

Carl Salt, principal of Grace Academy Darlaston, said the school had an excellent reputation for the safeguarding of students.

He added: "In the case of Ian Jones, we took immediate action to safeguard our students by removing him from teaching and conducting our own comprehensive inquiry by the trust."

"As required, we also notified the Disclosure and Barring Service and worked with external bodies including the NCTL and the local authority designated officer."

Mr Jones has the right to appeal.

The open road is ready for business



Councillor Adrian Andrew on the road surface at the bridge on Bentley Road South, which has been reopened after two years

A BUSY Black Country road has reopened as the first stage of a major improvement project is completed.

The northbound section of Bentley Road South from the entrance to European Metal Recycling (EMR) and Marshlands Way roundabout re-opened on Sunday at 5pm after two years.

It followed work being carried out on a new rail bridge along Bentley Road South as part of the £26 million road improvement scheme.

But it comes as a new six month road closure will begin at the southern end of the road from Willenhall Road junction to the entrance of Holland Industrial.

Pedestrian access will largely be maintained along Bentley Road South throughout the project, although a diversion route to the canal tow path may be required at times of the work.

A new railway bridge forms part of the overall revamp of the highways network in the area.

Councillor Adrian Andrew, portfolio holder for economy, infrastructure and development said: "This is the completion of a first major phase of this vital road investment on Bentley Road South."

Other work as part of the scheme includes the widening of Bentley Mill Way, which will remain closed until later this year. There will also be new traffic lights near to the James Bridge aqueduct.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fury as plaque is smashed up

VANDALS have destroyed a plaque of the Willenhall flag at the town's library. The granite stone was installed seven months ago to mark the unveiling of the area's very own flag, that recognises the world-famous lock industry and civic achievements.

Kaylie Plant, of Willenhall Aye We – behind the project – said: "Someone appears to have used a hammer to smash the plaque over the weekend."

"I am very angry about it because our group put a lot of hard work into getting the project done."

The plaque was donated by stonemasons Brett Quintons.

Canal overhaul by volunteers

A STRETCH of canal that passes through Birchills has received a makeover as part of the big spring clean.

Walsall Council staff along with volunteers from Agenda 21, Ghausia Mosque, year six pupils from Birchills Church of England Primary School and the Canal and River Trust took part in the canal side clean-up.

The site includes the Boatmen's Rest building founded in 1846, established to support the lives of men and women working on the waterways and the historic lock-keeper's cottage.

Countdown to village carnival

ORGANISERS are gearing up for this year's Pelsall Carnival on Saturday.

This year's event will see the usual four commons in the village centre transformed for the day.

The carnival royalty will be officially unveiled at around 1pm in the main arena and take their place on the royal float in the procession which will leave around 1.45pm from Common Side, through the village to High Street.

Attractions on the day include stalls, a car boot, keep-fit sessions, entertainment, dog show and funfair.

End of life care workers start

TWO dedicated support workers have been appointed in a Black Country to improve and provide end of life care for people with dementia.

They will assist carers at homes in Walsall and are part of a year-long project between Pathways for Life, a partnership between Accord and Age UK, along with St Giles Hospice. The year-long project is being funded by NHS Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and Walsall Council.

Police combat drinkers

ROWDY street drinkers have been causing a nuisance in Caldmore, prompting complaints to police. Concern has been raised in the Caldmore Green area and Palfrey neighbourhood police team are to work with other organisations to find a long-term solution.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



THE Confederate flag, now regarded as a factor in the South Carolina church massacre, is cherished by old Southerners as a symbol of what they believe was a cultured, romantic and rural society, laid waste by the brute forces of Northern industry. Steel and iron trampled on cotton. It is a monstrously distorted view of history but it will surely be driven underground and reinforced by the banning of the flag.

"PENSIONER fights for right to kiss his wife" is a typical headline on the tragic story of Thomas and Joan Middleton. He is 87, she is 84 and in a care home with dementia. He wants to kiss her but staff say she complains about his attentions. This is a terrible dilemma, familiar to thousands of families but barely mentioned in the Alzheimer's debate. Joan is Thomas's wife. He loves her but it seems she has no idea who he is. He has become not only a stranger to her but an unwelcome stranger. Like so many dementia victims, she may have no memory of ever having been married. The wicked thing about dementia is that it steals more than one life.

BRITAIN'S favourite gardener utters the gardening term "bastard trenching" and the BBC feels it has to apologise. A viewer emailed: "Alan Titchmarsh just swore on TV. I think that's one of the signs of the Apocalypse." We hacks are not particularly offended by Titchmarsh's b-word. When a story is set in print not across one or two columns but across one-and-a-half columns, it is known as a bastard measure. In metalworking, the same word is commonly used. Files are gauged by their roughness as follows: rough, middle, bastard, second cut, smooth, and dead smooth. Just like people, really.



A READER living on a pension and counting the pennies says he has saved money by disconnecting his burglar-alarm system, turning off external lights and resigning from Neighbourhood Watch. Instead he has raised the black flag of Islamic State on his front lawn. "The police, MI5, MI6 and army are watching my house 24/7 and I'm saving fifty quid a month," he says.

FARAF Ann Abdul Hadi, 21, represented Malaysia at the South East Asia Games. She won six medals, including two golds. You might imagine she would be roundly congratulated. Not exactly. A bunch of religious leaders and internet trolls have condemned her for wearing a leotard which revealed her "aurat," an Islamic word describing the thigh and genital area. I wonder how many times these men of God had to scrutinise the footage before deciding a sin had been committed. If a few sex-starved clerics spent less time slaver-ing over Faraf's aurat and a little more time admiring her God-given skills, this world would probably be a happier place.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Foreign investment leads to 457 jobs

FOREIGN investment helped create more than 450 jobs in the Black Country in 2014/15, the latest UK Trade and Investment figures show. The 457 was a 310 per cent improvement on the previous year when 146 were created in the Local Enterprise Partnership area.

The figures also showed that more foreign businesses invested in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull

LEP, which takes in the Cannock Chase, Lichfield and Wyrre Forest districts, than any other LEP region. It attracted 73 new foreign direct investment projects – nine per cent more than the next highest LEP and created 4,739 new jobs.

Investors included world-famous brands such as Jaguar Land Rover, KPMG, Virgin Media and Amazon. Stewart Towe, Black Country LEP

chairman, said: "The figures released by UKTI are testament to the ongoing work that the Black Country LEP is doing, through Invest Black Country and partners, to promote the Black Country as an investment destination."

"Our sector strengths, coupled to the effort we have put into raising the profile of the area, mean that we are at the head of a growing pipeline

of enquiries in the automotive, aerospace and construction technologies sectors. The figures continue to highlight that the Black Country is fast becoming the investment hotspot in the UK, and a real contender to London. It produces some of the most amazing metal products in the world, some of which ensure that buildings stand, cars run and stop and that planes fly and land."

Stores deny selling alcohol to patients

Report by Craig Hughes

OFF licences near Walsall Manor Hospital have insisted they would not sell alcohol to patients after it was claimed that people in hospital gowns were being served and then returning to wards drunk.

A meeting of Walsall's Health and Wellbeing Board was told last week that patients – some with drips attached – had managed to buy booze while being treated at the hospital.

But shops nearby have insisted they are not responsible and would act more responsibly than that.

Sunny Singh, manager of The Local in Alumwell Road, said: "We would never serve patients who came in with their gowns on. It is common sense if someone is in their gown they are in hospital and in there for a reason. The last thing you want to do is cause further health concerns."

Harbehajan Singh Thandi, who runs Manor Wine at the junction of Pleck Road, added: "They have come in with a drip in their hand but I don't serve them, I turn them away."

The Nisha store in Pleck Road has put a notice on the front of its door and in the shop saying it will not serve patients.

It states: "Nisha Convenience Store fully support health care in Walsall so may refuse to serve alcohol to people receiving treatment from Walsall Manor Hospital."

Action is now being taken to crack down on any shops who sell alcohol to inpatients from Walsall Manor in a bid to tackle the borough's drink-related problems.

Trading standards have also been informed with officers now speaking to shop workers about restricting sales.

Shock statistics revealed more than 43,000 residents in Walsall have been classed as binge drinkers, while the number of men suffering booze-related deaths rose by 10 per cent over six years.

Superheroes star in charity dance



Starmakers Dance Academy, front, from left are Milan Lanns, aged 11 and Caitlin Lockyer, 12

IT was not the usual dance session at a Black Country academy, which hosted a very special meeting to raise money for charity.

Superman, Mario and Luigi and a fair few princesses were among youngsters who danced in fancy dress at the Starmakers Dance Academy in Great Barr on Friday.

The event saw all classes brought together for the one-off dance, with around 65 members aged between

three and 18 throwing some shapes at an hour, with siblings and even parents also getting in on the act.

It was inspired by Macmillan Cancer's Dress up and Dance campaign and parents were asked to donate £2.50 for each child that took part.

Dance teacher Donna Leach lead the dressed-up dancers through various routines during the fun-filled session, in which, naturally,

a few party favourites blared from the speakers at the Tanhouse Community Centre in Hamstead Road, where the academy is based.

She said: "It was a party-style event and we did have a couple of parents who did it as well."

The fancy dress dance is thought to have raised more than £200 for Macmillan and Donna, aged 29, said she would be happy to host it again at some point in the future.

Temporary staff bill is up £100k for month

THE cost of temporary workers at Walsall Manor Hospital increased by more than £100,000 in a month, latest figures have revealed.

A total of £1.636 million was spent by Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust in May, an increase of £121,000 on the month before, a report has shown.

The trust has been trying to crack-down on the level of expenditure on bank, locum and agency workers. It spent almost £20m in the last financial year and is now recruiting more than 80 permanent nurses.

Figures to the trust board show bank costs increased by £90,000 to £573,000 in May and the locum bill went up by £63,000 to £397,000.

Although the agency costs reduced by £32,000 to £666,000 in the month-long period. A reason for the rise has been put down to medical staffing.

It comes as the use of temporary workers had been brought down by £212,000 between March and April.

The trust spent almost £20m on temporary workers in 2014/15 as it struggled to control expenditure due to rising demand from patients.

It is hoped the level of expenditure on such workers will be cut through recruiting permanent nurses. The £3.5m investment has already been approved to ensure the Manor Hospital has enough ward staff.

It had been hoped to see nurses recruited from Ireland in an attempt to get new people in quicker. However, chiefs recently revealed there has been a more positive response from agencies in Greece, Italy and Spain.

EDL assurances sought by MP

A WALSALL MP has written to the Government, police and council chiefs to seek reassurances after the English Defence League announced a planned demonstration on August 15.

Valerie Vaz, MP for Walsall South, has written to the Home Secretary, West Midlands police and crime commissioner, the commander of the Walsall police and the council's chief executive to voice her concerns and ask what powers will be used to prevent a breach of the peace.

She added: "I do not want the EDL to come to Walsall. The last EDL demonstration in Walsall on September 29, 2012 ended in violence."

"The EDL is not welcome in Walsall. They should not bring their divisive views to Walsall and should stay away."

Caravans move in on estate land

TRAVELLERS have settled on land in Goscote as the borough faces a surge in illegal camps. Council officers visited the site in Goscote Lodge Crescent last week after two caravans and vehicles settled on the site. The land is on the former Goscote estate.

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£1.5m hope to cut down on hospital bed issues

A TOTAL of £1.5million will be spent at Walsall Manor Hospital to reduce bed-blocking so hundreds of extra elderly patients can be treated.

Extra staff will be recruited and hours extended to allow more than 400 elderly and frail patients to be seen at the hospital each month.

Bosses at the Manor have drawn up the plans which mean more patients who turn up at A&E can be seen faster and then sent home to be cared for there.

Health chiefs say treating people at home means they can maintain their independence. Improved technology will also be introduced including 50 laptops and tablets allowing staff to access information quicker and easier so they can record patient consultations in their own home.

Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust chief executive Richard Kirby said: "The best thing for the patient is to get a team of specialists to look after that person, to assess them very early and make a decision about what the best way to look after them is."

He added by reducing the need to stay in hospital, it meant patients were able to maintain their independence at home.

The extended service will provide capacity for around 22 patients a day, compared to seven now. The equivalent of 650 people rather than just over 200. The new system will see patients arriving at Walsall Manor A&E, getting screened and then referred to the Frail and Elderly People Patient (FEP) service.

Busy few months for fundraisers

FROM a sponsored abseil to bag packing and a summer fair – a busy few months lie ahead for Walsall Healthcare Charity. But fundraisers are appealing for local people across the borough to help spread the word about events as well as offer their support.

Fundraising officer Youla Steven, is keen to hear from patients past and present, residents of all ages and anyone interested in helping the Manor Hospital and community services make improvements.

"Our first big event is an abseil off The New Art Gallery on July 4. Full training will be given on the day. Thanks to sponsorship from Evans Halshaw the entry fee is now only £20. If people raise a minimum of £120 in sponsorship, there is no fee."

Gas mains work to see closure

A ROAD in Wednesbury will be closed for the next three weeks while new gas mains are fitted. Roberts Road, off the busy Walsall Road, is expected to be shut until July 17. Iron pipes are to be replaced with plastic

New MP Morton in royalties move



Aldridge Brownhills MP Wendy Morton

CHANGES to the law to stop the police and government being forced to pay out millions of pounds in compensation after a riot are being proposed by a Black Country MP.

Mike Wood is one of three newly elected West Midlands MPs introducing a proposed law.

West Midlands Police was forced to apply for £5.3m of funding from the Home Office to cover compensation claims following the 2011 riots in Wolverhampton, Birmingham and West Bromwich.

The MP for Dudley South follows

Wolverhampton's Rob Marris, who is proposing allowing terminally ill people to end their lives with medical assistance.

Aldridge-Brownhills MP Wendy Morton is also proposing a 'private member's bill' that will allow Great Ormond Street Hospital to keep the royalties from JM Barrie's Peter Pan stories. The three made it onto the list after a ballot of MPs with Mr Marris at the top and therefore given the most time in the Commons to debate his proposed law.

Mrs Morton's bill will help Great

Ormond Street Hospital continue to receive the royalties bequeathed by JM Barrie from his Peter Pan stories. It has become a new charity independent of the Department of Health which means it requires an Act of Parliament to change the name on the bequest.

Mrs Morton said: "From the evidence provided by the Government's recent consultation into NHS charities I believe the changes I propose will give greater freedom to these charities to attract additional funds than at present."

Quarter of schools in 'inadequate' rating

A QUARTER of schools and academies in Walsall have been rated inadequate or require improvement by education watchdogs, a new report has showed.

Out of the 120 nursery, primary and secondary schools in the borough, 32 were given the ratings in their latest Ofsted inspections.

The figures come from a scrutiny of education performance and is a year after a separate report by Ofsted which rated the council ineffective at supporting schools.

In response to the latest report, education chiefs at Walsall Council have set an action plan to drive up standards and have insisted significant improvements have been made.

According to the scrutiny report, eight of Walsall's schools are currently placed under special measures with three being removed from the order from October last year.

The report shows that four of Walsall's eight secondary academies have been rated inadequate by Ofsted including West Walsall E-Act Academy, The Mirus Academy, Ormiston Shelded Academy and the Black Country University Technical College, which is set to close later this summer.

Improvement

However, the report does reflect the good work done in all of the borough's eight nursery schools with them all being rated as outstanding. Councillor Peter Smith, who is the chairman of the Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, said: "There are 64,000 young people in Walsall and a big percentage of them are going to an inadequate school or one which requires improvement. This is concerning."

"And what these figures also show is exactly the opposite of the message being portrayed to the public that turning primary schools into academies will improve performance levels."

"These figures show that four of the secondary schools which turned into academies in Walsall are currently inadequate."

An action plan drawn up by council chiefs includes working on a number of key priorities to help the borough's education performance rise up again. To help improve performance of schools, Walsall Council has formed a new education challenge board which consists of councillors, headteachers, governors and officers from children's services.

Cyclists pound roads for cash



The team of cyclists, front to back, Paul Proffitt Senior, Paul Jr, Thomas Eustace, Harry Proffitt

A FAMILY from Walsall have cycled nearly 1000 miles in an effort to raise £10,000 for charity.

Paul Proffitt, aged 54, from Chester Road North, Brownhills, endured the challenge from Lands End to John O'Groats with his two sons Paul, 28, and Harry, 20, along with 27-year-old nephew Thomas Eustace.

The ride was to raise funds for Diabetes UK and the diabetes unit at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital who have provided years of care and support for Paul

Senior's wife Mandy. The 52-year-old has been living with type one diabetes for over 30 years and, after working at Walsall Manor Hospital as a diabetes specialist for 10 years, was forced to retire due to the condition in 2013. She supported the four cyclists along the whole journey, driving a support vehicle while 32-year-old Steven Woolley drove the motorhome for them to stop in every night.

She said: "I think it is a fantastic thing they have done. Paul has had to live with diabetes as much

as I have over the years and he wanted to give something back." Paul Senior and Paul Junior, who is the head chef at Staffordshire's Swinfen Hall Hotel, are both avid cyclists but teammates Harry and Thomas were both novices.

The four had to endure a 30mph headwind for the last 100 miles before reaching John O'Groats.

For a fully history of the team and to help them reach their £10,000 target, visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com and search Paul Proffitt.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Car destroyed after blaze hits

A CAR was destroyed in a suspected arson attack in a street in Bloxwich.

Firefighters tackled the blaze in Chepstow Road despite the threat of flying objects, including aerosol cans that were in the car, while putting it out.

Fire crews were called just before 3.10am yesterday and spent around an hour at the scene.

West Midlands Fire Service spokesman Neil Spencer said: "We were called at 3.07am to Chepstow Road in Bloxwich and we sent five firefighters."

Students' invite to food festival

CATERING students were invited by a top chef to help him at a food festival.

Following visits to Walsall College to deliver masterclasses to Hospitality and Catering students, award winning chef, Chris Burt, asked a group of level 3 students to assist him at Shrewsbury Food Festival.

College assessor Steve Biggs, said: "Chris has visited the college twice in the last few months to pass on his skills to our students, and has been overwhelmed by their existing knowledge and professionalism."

Crews rescue children in tree

CHILDREN had to be rescued by firefighters after getting stuck up a tree in Bentley.

A ladder was used to help get the young boy and girl down from the tree in Poplar Avenue.

Firefighters from Willenhall received a 999 call from a girl who said her friends were stuck in the tree and in danger of falling.

Crews arrived within three minutes at just before 4.30pm on Monday last week, and helped them to ground.

Three-car collision leaves woman hurt

A WOMAN was taken to hospital following a three-car collision in Streetly last week.

Emergency services were called to Bakers Lane at around 9.50pm on Tuesday.

A woman in one of the vehicles suffered shoulder and knee pain and was taken to Heartlands Hospital for treatment.

A man in his 40s and a 17-year-old girl suffered minor injuries and were checked over at the scene.

Closure diversions

A ROAD closure will be in operation during rail track maintenance starting on Sunday. It takes place at the level crossing in Noose Lane, Willenhall, from midnight until 4.45pm. Diversion routes will be in operation for affected traffic including Willenhall Road and Wednesfield Road.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

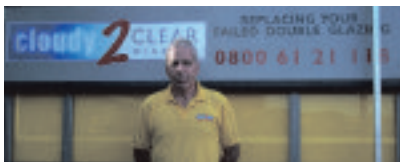
Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Bringing ID cards in through back door

AS night follows day, when the DVLA suddenly announced it was going to scrap paper driving licences, it was inevitable the computers were going to crash. Our government agencies don't lead the world in many areas, but when it comes to developing duff computer systems, they truly are in a league of their own.

But there is another, slightly disturbing aspect.

To get a security code which will enable, say, hire car companies to check your driving licence, you need to enter not just your driving licence number, but your National Insurance number as well. Just when did this data become the property of the DVLA?

For the past 25 years or so governments of all colours have been slaving at the idea of introducing some form of ID card. But the plans have always been stymied by public resistance to anything so authoritarian.

Now, anyone who drives a car must apply for a photo card, which has to be updated every 10 years, and that for some unexplained reason is tied to your National Insurance file.

Don't be surprised if, some time during the next 10 years, the powers-that-be introduce something called a 'smart licence', perhaps on a voluntary basis to begin with.

It will no doubt contain a microchip, which will progressively be updated in the years that follow, and before you know it, the ID card has come in by the back door. Smart ID cards, of course.

GOING in for what is fashionably known as 'rebranding', Wolverhampton City Council has decided it no longer wants to be known as Wolverhampton City Council, but the City of Wolverhampton. That should improve public services no end.

The council says it won't cost the taxpayer a penny. But aside from the fact I can no longer hear the word 'branding' without thinking of the awful driving instructor in the Vistaprint ads, why does any council need to worry about that sort of thing? It's not as if people can take their custom elsewhere, and defect to a council with a more forward-thinking, go-ahead logo. Whatever the emblem, we are stuck with the council we have got.

What is really wrong, though, is the way that the council has commandeered the identity of the city itself. Wolverhampton council is not the same as the City of Wolverhampton. The city can trace its roots back 1,030 years, to the days of Lady Wulfruna, and is viewed with great pride and affection by most of its inhabitants.

Wolverhampton council, in its present form, dates back to 1974, and is a public sector body responsible for maintaining the street lights and emptying the bins. Not the same at all.



Vulnerable runaways are targeted while living on the streets



Serious issues - police and crime commissioner David Jamieson



Cultural change - Assistant Chief Constable Carl Foulkes

Shocking scale of grooming revealed

PETE MADELEY looks at how child sexual exploitation is being addressed in the light of the latest police reports

THE shocking scale of trafficking and grooming gangs across the West Midlands has been revealed in a series of police reports.

Official documents dating back to 2009 show West Midlands Police was not fully aware of the extent of the region's high level of vulnerable youngsters and how to deal with the problem.

One report says that although the majority of suspects were from an Asian background, police were concerned about the dangers of racial stereotyping when dealing with incidents of abuse. Another details the lack of trust between police and social workers. Reports also show how children living at home were targeted with more frequency than those in care.

Escalating

It has also emerged that the force's failure to cope with the rising problem was so acute, the identities of many of those engaged in the abuse was either not known or outdated.

Police difficulties in dealing with the widespread and escalating scale of the abuse has not been made public until now.

In Sandwell in 2010, two vulnerable young women were noted as being 'at high risk' of sexual exploitation. Police believe they were being groomed - or were already being sexually exploited - at the time of the report.

Two other young women were identified as being at high risk in Dudley, along with six girls in Walsall during the same period.

Officers in Wolverhampton, where two groups of young women had been identified, said alcohol, drugs and acts of physical violence were 'key leverages' used by offenders to groom victims into prostitution. The reports also reveal the largest proportion of victims, at 44 per cent, did not reside in children's homes and lived with their parents or other family



Files show police were not fully aware of the extent of the problem

members. "The force has very limited insight into the threat, and the intelligence profile related to children who are not in care is non-existent," a document said.

"The current situation poses significant challenges for West Midlands Police in protecting children." Victims were also said to frequently abscond from their family homes, leading to calls for the force to improve the way it deals with such situations. The most common offenders were said to be Pakistani males aged between 16 and 26, and the majority of the victims were white.

But the report showed senior officers had warned of the dangers of racial stereotyping amid claims of a 'widespread problem of British Pakistani men exploiting under-age white girls'. Police said 'convenience and accessibility' may be the prime drivers for those looking for victims, rather than race.

But another report, entitled Internal Human Trafficking For Sexual Exploitation Within the West Midlands, revealed that of 139 female victims, 78 per cent were white. A 'significant proportion' of the suspects were said to be of Muslim background.

The report also raised concerns about 'inadequate identification and management of threat to life issue facing victims'.

The oldest document dates from October 2009 and highlights a lack of trust between police and social workers said to be prevalent at the time. "For a number of years children in care, or residing in children's homes have repeatedly run away," it states. "Unfortunately they are often perceived to be streetwise and police officers consider them to be a nuisance and permanent drain on resources."

"Children's services, home managers and social workers are frustrated by what they per-

ceive to be a lack of interest and action from police officers. Officers are equally frustrated by their perception the workers are not protecting the children and let them run away."

The report adds children in care who regularly go missing 'receive very little police attention', despite police intelligence showing young girls were being groomed by older men who were often involved in drug trafficking and other criminality. "The safe and well check is mostly carried out by uniformed response officers and is often in an atmosphere of conflict, the girl not wanting to speak and the officer under pressure to move onto next incident. There is a need for a more formalised corporate approach."

In response, West Midlands Police says the force has undergone 'a significant cultural change' in how it investigates and tackles child sexual exploitation (CSE).

Assistant Chief Constable Carl Foulkes said: "These reports, spanning six years, give a real insight into the journey we have undertaken along with our partners in investigating and tackling child sexual exploitation. It is now very clear that the responsibility of tackling CSE lies with every police officer, staff member, PCSO and special constable."

"The force has carried out extensive work to train officers across the force in how to identify and deal with CSE so we can gain as much intelligence as possible and thereby improving the outcomes for victims."

"We continue to take great steps and as a result of our efforts and without doubt the coverage within local and national media, we are seeing more victims coming forward, knowing we will take their allegations seriously and treat them sensitively and respectfully. Tackling child sexual exploitation is at the heart of everything we do, working closely with our local authorities across the area and the respective Children's Safeguarding Boards."

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson said 'serious issues' remained that police and partner agencies were working on together to tackle.

"I believe that a more consistent approach of joint working would help," he said. "We need a concerted effort and a joined-up approach to tackle child sexual exploitation in the West Midlands."

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Vulcan is the pride of our skies

THE picture of the Vulcan Bomber published in the Express & Star recently, is an illustration of one of Aesop's Fables 'The Tortoise and the Hare', a race in which the tortoise out-runs the hare.

During the 1960s at air shows around the country, the commentator would announce the arrival of the RAF Heavy Bomber the Avro Vulcan. It would come across to the centre of the airfield, then climb vertically in a crescendo of noise and smoke, followed by rolls and very tight turns; wonderful stuff. Due to the tremendous effort by volun-

teers, the one we see today was kept flying, helped by a generous financial contribution by our own Sir Jack Hayward. I worked on Vulcans in the early 1960s at 35 Squadron Coningsby in Lincolnshire. A lesser-known fact about the Vulcan is that it has five jet engines, one called the 'Airborne Auxiliary Power Plant'. To those of us on the ground it was referred to as 'A' squared 'P' squared. We were told that the engine was originally developed as a Rover car engine.

J GREGORY
Willenhall

Sir Lenny is good choice for honour

DID the person who wrote about Lenny Henry getting a knighthood swallow a bitter pill or what?

For one thing, he is by no means a 'luvvie'; he has worked hard to become the man he has become.

He and Richard Curtis have become the face of Comic Relief that this year has raised a total of £1bn for this country and Africa.

Not bad for a lad from Dudley, there are some people who don't deserve a gong, Lenny is not one, he should be honoured.

Congrats Lenny and his much loved proud family I am sure.

M T BARKER
Walsall

Centre not the best for shopping

DARLASTON was always my town from when I was very young, until it became Asda town.

Since then Walsall took over as the place to shop or just have a look around and browse, but over the last few years the town centre is starting to go the same way as Darlaston. On a recent visit I could not even walk down the main street without being confronted every few yards by chuggers and other charity organisations accosting me.

On one occasion one of these people would not take no for an answer and persisted for a few minutes trying to get my wife and myself to stop. He did not relent until he was told in no uncertain terms to get lost.

Walsall is full of charity shops, betting shops and pawn shops, the old Walsall is disappearing fast and very soon will go the same way as Darlaston but renamed Tesco town.

I HUNTER
Willenhall

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

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EMAIL

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expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Interesting reply on state of education

RECENTLY I wrote to the Prime Minister concerning the long-standing failings to improve the local education standards by Walsall Council.

I have now received a reply from the Department for Education.

I quote: Ofsted's report dated July 22, 2014, makes it clear that Walsall Council's 'arrangements for supporting school improvements were ineffective'.

Among other things, Ofsted instructed the local authority to 'ensure there is a clear and up-to-date picture of all the schools'.

It carries on: 'Strengthen the implementation of the categorisation of all schools to support and ensure the

support is proportionate to need. Ensure robust systems are in place to check and improve the work of local authority officers.'

Having now delivered a copy of this letter to the council via our local councillor on June 20, for Walsall Council's head of schools, the challenge is now what action is being implemented to fully correct and publicly report.

The other points in my letter to the PM regarding leadership, motivation, discipline, intellectual capabilities and excessive sick leave, were apparently beyond the remit of the Government's education department.

RAY HAMMOND,
Alexandra Way,

Cemetery is ignored by authority

WITH reference to the article about the cutting as mentioned in the Chronicle of June 18, would Councillor Anthony Harris like to give comments why Ryecroft Cemetery has been forgotten in the process of being looked after, while Streetly, Willenhall and Bloxwich are immaculate.

No flowers have ever been planted as you enter. Many telephone calls have been made, but no-one is interested. Ryecroft seems to have been forgotten, but family members are not.

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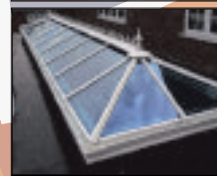
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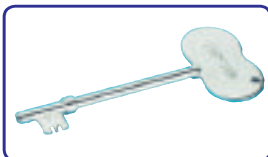
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Saddled up for war-themed exhibition



Martyna Sliwinska aged 11, from the Mirus Academy took second place in the junior section of the contest

AN ARTWORK exhibition paying tribute to animals caught up in the horrors of the First World War opened at a museum in Walsall.

The works which went on display from Sunday onwards at the Leather Museum have been created by pupils from schools including Mirus Academy in Walsall. It is part of a national competition to promote a £90,000 fundraising appeal for a memorial for the animals involved in the war at the National Memorial Arboretum.

It has been organised by the Free Spirit Horse Memorial Appeal in association with Gartmore Riding School

based in Hammerwich, near Brownhills. Winners of the art initiative were Martyna Sliwinska and Harrison Sanders, both of, Mirus Academy, Walsall; Brandon Challinor, of Woodville Junior School, Derby; and Emily Craddock, West Park School, also in Derby.

Around one million horses served with the British and Commonwealth forces during the Great War, but less than 60,000 were transported to Britain at the end of the war after pulling guns, rations, and munitions to the front often in appalling conditions.

The memorial will primarily commemorate the horse's service to hu-

mans in conflict, but will also give visitors a chance to reflect on the horse's wider contribution to the workplace, sport, rehabilitation and education.

The fundraising is being co-ordinated by a group of volunteers at the riding school, in Hall Lane, who plan to raise the total needed by 2018.

Gypsy, the Shetland pony, has been named a mascot for the campaign. A history pack linked to Free Spirit was created by Andrew Bowman, of King Edward VI School, in Lichfield.

For more details on the memorial visit www.freespiritmemorial.co.uk

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JLR's icing on the cake for Defender milestone

IT'S the Great British Bake Off! Star baker Lara Clarke really rose to the challenge to make this remarkable half-sized Land Rover cake to celebrate the two millionth Defender coming off the production line.

Weighing an incredible 600kg (1322lbs), and using 50kg (110lbs) of butter cream, 50kg of fondant icing, and 20kg (44lbs) of chocolate glazing, the creation is Lara's biggest to date.



Lara Clarke

When staff gathered at Jaguar Land Rovers' Solihull plant, to celebrate the milestone of the iconic 4x4, they were greeted by the giant vanilla sponge.

It took Miss Clarke, aged 29, 150 hours to make and fed 2,000 employees at the factory.

Miss Clarke, who lives in Brownhills, has previously hit the headlines for her life-size Jennifer Lawrence and Johnny Depp cakes.

She said: "I had a phone call from JLR in Solihull saying they had a big event to celebrate the two millionth Defender that they had people from all over world coming to celebrate.

"They asked if I could make a cake. "Initially they thought it would be small but when I suggested I could make one half the size, they were stunned.

"A real Land Rover Defender measures about four metres long and this one is two metres.



A view of the huge cake made by Lara Clarke to mark the Land Rover milestone

"The only reason I did not offer to make a full-size one was because my house would not be big enough."

There were 50 hours of planning and 50 hours of making the frame to support the cake before she even started baking.

Also, all the work had to be completed within a few days because it all had to be edible.

Adored

She said: "This is the biggest cake I have ever done. The cakes I have entered into the competitions are ones that are not going to be eaten so I can relax. This one I adored doing."

Miss Clarke still makes cakes as a hobby in her spare time from her day

job as a website chat assistant. She also revealed how fraught she was when transporting the cake from Walsall to Solihull.

She said: "I was so worried. We had it in the back of a van and but a sign on the back door that told other drivers we were travelling at 20mph because we were carrying a giant Land Rover cake."

"When we got there everything was fine but everyone was like 'wow'."

"But then it was a case of how are we going to get it out? We had to use a JLR forklift truck and they stored it in a cool area alongside cars."

It is 67 years since the first Land Rover Station Wagon came down the production line.

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10 App-y days as Black Country festivities near

The Chronicle
Thursday, July 2, 2015

A FREE app has been launched to keep people up-to-speed on this year's Black Country Festival.

The app can now be downloaded onto smartphones, and features the latest news and events from the festival, which runs throughout July.

Steve Edwards, chairman of the Black Country Festival Community Group, said: "The app gives everyone easy access to the festival via their mobile phones. We're really grateful to Freecom for all their work and we're confident that loads of people across the Black Country will be downloading the app."

The app also has a shop where people can buy Black Country flags and other merchandise, links to the official Twitter and Facebook pages of the festival, and allows venues to book musical acts available in their area.

A packed festival programme includes a Black Country Beer Day and a Black Country 10km run, with events throughout July to celebrate Black Country Day, which is on July 14. People can download the app at www.freecom.net/black-countryfestival or visit www.black-countryfestival.co.uk for details.

Residents hit out over dust and flies problem near tip

AN illegal tip is operating in Aldridge, prompting complaints from residents that they are being plagued by dust and flies.

Bosses at Walsall Council say no planning permission was given to Aldridge Aggregates and Recycling to open on a commercial site off Middlemore Lane.

The owners of the site have now been warned by the council and the Environment Agency that enforcement action will be taken if work continues.

A local resident, who did not want to be named, said he first saw lots of pallets being put on the site, called Aldridge Aggregates & Recycling, about four to five months ago. He added: "Over the last couple of weeks we have been noticing flies in the house. It is awful, there is noise pollution. It stinks on there."

Action is also being threatened against firms who continue to take their waste to the site.

Simon Neilson, Walsall Council's executive director for economy and environment, said: "Walsall Council is aware that an aggregate and timber recycling facility has started op-

erating on a commercial site off Middlemore Lane, Aldridge.

"This site presently does not have planning permission for this form of activity, as a result of which, planning officers formally raised this with the site operator at the end of May - requiring operations to cease within 28 days subject to a successful planning application being submitted."

He said a company representing the operator claimed a planning application would be submitted before the end of the month.

Mr Neilson added: "When received we will undertake consultation with residents and local business. The Environment Agency has notified the operator that a permit is required or activities should cease. In conjunction with this, the council's pollution control service is currently dealing with several complaints relating to the site that include emissions of noise and dust. If operations continue and matters are not satisfactory addressed, the council will consider more formal action."

Area environment manager Mark Smith added: "We are aware of the illegal waste site operating on Middlemore Lane, Aldridge."



Area environment manager Mark Smith at the Aldridge site

M6 misery to continue with further works

DRIVERS face months more disruption as roadworks on the M6 have been extended until this autumn.

Work is taking place as part of the smart motorway upgrade between Junction 10A at Essington to 13 at Stafford. Once completed, the scheme will see motorists allowed to use the hard shoulder in a bid to ease traffic.

The project was due to be completed this spring, but it has now emerged that additional works have been added to the scheme which will not be completed until the autumn.

A Highways England spokesperson, said: "We began work on the M6 J10A-13 smart motorway scheme in October 2013 to ease congestion and improve journey reliability."

"Good progress has been made and the scheme end date has been extended to Autumn 2015 as we are now delivering a significant amount of additional work, such as resurfacing the whole section."

"By combining this work now, we are utilising existing traffic management and reducing the need for maintenance closures in the future, thereby minimising disruption while delivering improved benefits."

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Bowling club members hit out at bench thieves

A MEMORIAL bench to a long-serving captain has been stolen from a bowls club in Walsall, leaving members devastated.

The bench, in memory of former bowls player and committee member Leonard Dyal, was taken from Pelsall Community Association Bowling Club, Station Road.

Mr Dyal and his wife Peggy moved to Pelsall in 1962 and joined Pelsall Bowls Club in 1979.

Mr Dyal was still a member when he died in August 2013 and Peggy, who donated the bench, is still a member now. Mrs Dyal received a call on Friday morning informing her that the bench had been stolen. She said: "It is despicable that anybody would do this, when I received the call it was very upsetting, I was devastated."

Reminder

"It had been well-planned I think. The green is concealed and you can't see it from the main road."

"My daughter and I thought it would be a good idea to have the bench. I thought it would be an appropriate reminder of him for whenever I went down there. I don't think the bench will reappear in Pelsall now though."

The bench was installed in April and was bolted to a concrete base on the side of the club's bowling green.

Pelsall Bowls Club is now in its 50th anniversary year. Brian Lewis, club secretary, said: "Leonard was an outstanding player and a committee member at the club for 30 years. It was an expensive bench with a plaque on it. It is such a shocking thing to do."

West Midlands Police have been informed of the theft. Anyone with information should call 101.



Ralph Broad, William Heath, Brian Lewis with Brian Green and widow Peggy Dyal, at the site of the stolen bench at Pelsall Community Association Bowling Club

Jhoots HQ completion nears

WORK on a new multi-million pound pharmacy headquarters in Walsall will be completed within months, developers have said. The £3.2m Jhoots base in Hatherton Street has been under construction since last summer and work is ahead of schedule.

The 20,000 sq ft four-storey offices will create more than 30 new jobs and is being built by Cannock-based Jesup. Work is due to be finished in Autumn and there is space for two more office buildings on the land. Clive Jes-

sup, chief executive of the developers, said: "We are pleased to be contributing to the success of Walsall with this prestige commercial development at Hatherton Street. By using local contractors and suppliers we are making sure that the financial benefit stays in the local community."

Deputy council leader Adrian Andrew, said: "Having been closely involved in this project for a number of years I am delighted to see such excellent progress."

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A view of the old-fashioned, black and white movie showing the penguins enclosure



An old photo of the zoo, and more related material



The artist and film lecturer seen with his film showing the iconic zoo entrance



Adam Kossoff with the stuffed owl at the exhibition



Lubetkin and Tecton's bear ravine in all its glory

Film teacher brings magic of zoo to life

A MULTIMEDIA exhibition organised by a Wolverhampton lecturer tells the story of Dudley Zoo and the restoration of its unique animal enclosures.

Renowned artist and writer Adam Kossoff, who also teaches film and video studies at Wolverhampton University, made a 1950s-style movie called Animal Architecture, after spending three days with a camera inside Dudley Zoo.

The film, narrated by Lenny Henry, focuses on the restoration of its unique animal enclosures, which were designed in 1937 by Modernist architect Berthold Lubetkin, while giving a unique insight into the daily routines at the zoo.

It forms the centre of an exhibition which will run at Wolverhampton Art Gallery until

MEMORY LANE

By Jordan Harris

September 19. Mr Kossoff said: "The film is inspired by the free cinema movement and I think that style suits the atmosphere of a zoo quite nicely."

"I wanted to focus on the architecture, because Berthold Lubetkin was quite an avant garde designer and his work is amazing."

Onesie

"The film also looks at the relationship between humans and animals and emphasises the zoo's atmosphere and its importance as a leisure and cultural attraction for local people."

"It feels like an old film because of the way it is shot and the old-fashioned architecture but the people are wearing modern clothes."

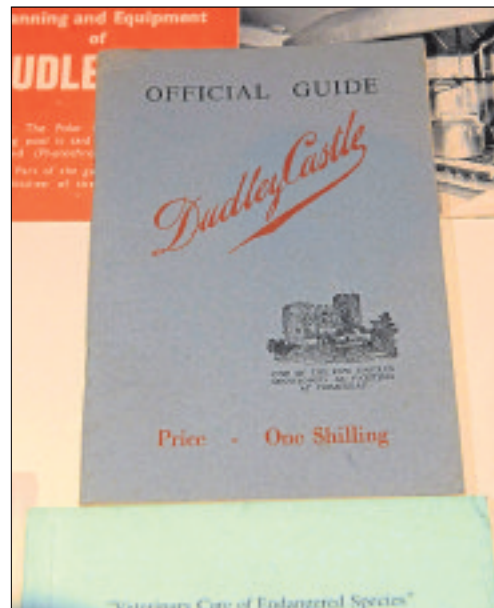
"On one of the days I was shooting, everyone who came to the zoo was wearing a onesie."

"The loss of history that occurs when we knock buildings down fascinates me and I think it is a great subject for a film maker to focus on."

"The restoration of Lubetkin's work means history is being preserved in this instance."

"It was great to get Lenny Henry to narrate the film too, it is nice that he has a bit of an accent and of course he knows all about Dudley and the zoo."

As well as the film, people can look at original design plans for Dudley Zoo, alongside artistic photographs of its enclosures and a fascinating 3D sculptural piece based around a revolving stuffed owl, which has been christened Minerva, in honour of a famous quote from philosopher Georg Wilhelm Fredrick Hegel.



Some of the documents gathered which are part of the exhibition

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Strumming up cash for Rosie's charity



Scarlet Churchill with Karen Ross and Ester Bennett as they prepare to host a charity walk and music festival

AN event featuring live music and dancing is taking place in Walsall to help raise money for charity.

Bands and Bollywood-style dancers will be providing entertainment at The Longhorn pub, in Sutton Road, during this year's Rosie's Charity Walk on Sunday.

The pub is on the route of the three-mile walk, organised by Rosie's Helping Hands charity based in Aldridge.

The walk and festival at Aldridge Airfield is now in its 14th year. Karen Ross set up the charity with her husband Sean in memory of their daughter Rosie who was stabbed to death at the age of 16 in 2001.

There will be a mobile stage on the car park of The Longhorn pub, with young musicians playing from 12.30pm until 2pm. Also on at the pub, licensee Esther Bennett will be holding a raffle and barbecue with all the proceeds raised going to the Rosie's Charity Walk fund.

Participants can take part in two walks on the day, either one mile or three miles. People can enter a walk on the day between 11.30am and 1.30pm. To sign up for the walk go to www.rosieshelpinghands.org

Cutting the grass to be stepped up by council

A FORTNIGHTLY grass-cutting service which was axed to help Walsall Council save £43,000 a year is to be reinstated after a barrage of complaints.

Council chiefs say residents' health and well-being was more important than meeting budget cuts, after the Labour administration chopped down the service.

Grass-cutting in Walsall had been drastically reduced from every two weeks to just once a year.

Leading calls to bring back a full service, Councillor Louise Harrison said: "In my 11 years as a councillor, I have never had so many complaints about one issue. For three weeks my phone has not stopped ringing."

"It's not just about saving money, it's also about the well-being of our residents and their children. "Obesity is a problem and yet here we have children who can't play football because they keep losing the ball in the long grass. They're told off if they play on car parks."

"It's a problem for disabled people, too. They have been getting their wheelchairs caught in the grass."

All 26 sites due to be left to pasture will now be mown every two weeks initially. A

review will then take place into whether to continue the service to all or just some of the sites in the next financial year.

The £43,000 cost includes a grass-cutter's salary, as well as vehicles and equipment. Re-introducing the service to 26 sites until the end of the growing season on September 30 using an agency will cost around £28,000.

Opposing views were voiced by some residents who felt that a more natural appearance, featuring wild flowers and associated wildlife, was preferable.

The council's change of heart comes after a town hall vote earlier this month which saw the Conservatives take control, promising to make changes in budget spending.

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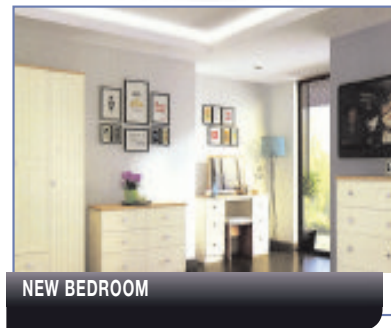
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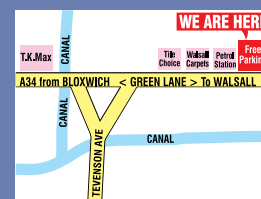
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Closure of M&S site to see staff moved on

MORE than 20 M&S workers will be affected as the retailer's clearance store at the Boundary Mill complex in Walsall is set to close.

Marks & Spencer chiefs said the closure came because it needed fewer outlet stores due to better stock management. A consultation is under way with the 21 staff employed at the site, in Bentley Mill Way, Bentley.

By Craig Hughes

Positions will be found for them at other stores in the region, the firm added.

The store opened for business in 2003.

The proposal will not affect its town centre store in Park Street.

Marks & Spencer spokesman Berry Yirrel said: "After much consideration we have decided to propose the closure of our Walsall Outlet store."

"Our Outlet clearance business needs fewer stores because our clothing team is managing stock levels better than ever before."

"All 21 colleagues affected by the proposal will be offered positions at other M&S stores if the closure goes ahead."

The group has also dropped its online Outlet web page.

Walsall Council's cabinet holder for economy Councillor Adrian Andrew said assistance has already been offered to the staff by the authority.

He said: "It is disappointing and we have offered help to M&S to help their staff in this difficult time."

"I am sure that Boundary Mill will have viable and exciting plans for the space being vacated."

The move follows the announcement that long-awaited Primark and Co-operative stores will open their doors in the town's Old Square Shopping Centre in August. Staff recruitment is under way for the new developments.

A range of redevelopment is being carried out in the heart of the town.

Write away for bookshop VIPs



Front - Andrew Sparke, back, from left, shop manager Amy Carter, David Muir, Bethany W Pope, David Wake, shop owner Scott Southey, Richard Bruce Clay, Eileen Wardbitch

POETRY and horror authors discussed their works with visitors at a bookshop in Walsall to celebrate Independent Bookshop Week.

Southcart Books hosted the author party to promote reading and writing. Around eight authors turned up to read their published work at the shop on Saturday to visitors. Scott Southey, who owns the shop, said: "We decided to do one of our book shop parties and we had free food and drink. They were poetry and horror authors. We had at least an extra 50 visitors come by the shop because of the event. It was a good day. The theme this year is 'give a book' so we have created a free book section where some of our books will be totally free to get people reading again."

The shop in Lower Hall Lane regularly holds author events giving them chance to hold readings and share their work. Mr Southey, aged 40, of Palfrey, added: "We've been open 14 months now and on average we have about two a month. Without these little events we wouldn't get to meet so many different people." For more information visit www.independentbooksellersweek.org.uk

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Stand to be built in club's revamp

A NEW stand is to be built as part of the revamp of an historic non-league football club's new ground in Walsall.

Darlaston Town (1874) took over the running of Bentley Leisure Pavilion and is now carrying a range of improvements including railings around the perimeter of the main pitch and to the dressing rooms.

But officials at the club, which was reformed last year after the collapse of 141 year-old Darlaston Town, are now planning a 50 seater supporter stand at a cost of up to £10,000.

It is hoped to be in place at the West Midlands League club by next March, subject to planning permission and securing funding.

Chairman Neil Chambers said: "We hope we can build a good quality football ground that will be an asset to the club and to the area." Darlaston Town was originally based at the City Ground, in Waverley Road, until the club folded in 2013.

It was reformed in August 2014.

Delight for academy following 'good' rating by inspectors

STAFF at an academy in Walsall are celebrating after an Ofsted inspection gave it an overall rating of 'good'.

Ormiston Shelfield Community Academy staff say they are 'delighted' by the rating which included achievement of pupils, quality of teaching, leadership and management, behaviour and safety of pupils and sixth form provision.

Following a two-day visit in May, inspectors commented on the 'positive and supportive climate for learning' throughout the academy and commended the 'visionary' leadership provided by the principal and senior vice principal, which has 'transformed' the academy. The report went on to describe the full leadership team as 'brave, determined and successful in raising achievement and improving teaching'.

Report by Simon Stone

The report noted that the academy is additionally well supported at a high level: "The sponsor, Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT), its Progress and Interim Executive Boards and leaders at all levels are securing significant improvements to students' achievement and teachers' performance."

Student comments also featured in the report, which quoted: "We respect others, even if they hold different views, have particular needs to help them or live differently to ourselves," stated one very mature and responsible Key Stage 4 pupil. Another student is quoted as saying: "This is a great school, the staff have turned my life around."

Bosses drop alarm fees

CONTROVERSIAL charges for 'lifeline' community alarms for pensioners in Walsall have been officially scrapped - with council bosses promising to refund fees. The unpopular charge affecting more than 2,000 people aged 80 and over will again be provided for free.

The new Conservative-run administration has pledged to backdate refunded fees to April 1 when the £150-a-year charge was introduced under the Labour-run authority earlier this year.

As a result 600 people said they wished to withdraw from the service. Councillor Eddie Hughes, head of social care, said: "We need to keep people in their homes for as long as they are able - that's where they feel most comfortable. But 600 were saying they'd rather take the risk than pay. If they were then to require other services, it could be more expensive and less appropriate."

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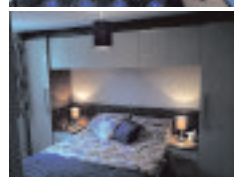
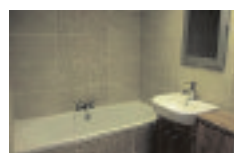
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Academy raises £4,000 for cancer charity

A SCHOOL in Walsall has raised more than £4,400 for the Teenage Cancer Trust. Blue Coat Academy, in Birmingham Road, has raised the money to improve the care of teenage patients at Birmingham Children's Hospital teenage cancer unit.

During the Easter term, the whole school spent their spare time organising or participating in charitable

events. Pupils raised money by baking and selling cakes, engaging in sponsored silences and a raffle.

A fashion show, film night, disco and market were also held. Emily Lloyd, representative from Teenage Cancer Trust, collected a £4453.90 cheque from staff and students on Friday.

The money raised will be used to fund a youth worker based at the unit,

who will provide one-to-one support to teenage patients and organise social events to keep spirits high during their treatment and care at the hospital.

Principal Alan Westerman said: "Blue Coat has a long history of charitable giving. Every year, we come together as a family to raise funds for deserving causes."

Poppy love for Jack in T-shirt success



Jack Athersmith, aged eight, from Jubilee Academy, Bloxwich, with Alison Bates of the RBL and his design

A Walsall schoolboy has won a competition to design a T-shirt for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

Jack Athersmith, aged eight, was presented with the poppy T-shirt that he had designed at the Jubilee Academy's sports day in Mossley, Bloxwich.

He was also given a gift voucher for winning the junior school category of the Poppy Appeal's competition across South Staffordshire and the Black Country.

Jack was surprised to find out he had won, and even more surprised to find his family sitting behind him as the presentation was made at the

school. His father Matt Athersmith said: "We were absolutely over the moon, it was great. We got a call to go the school because he had won the competition, it was a total surprise for Jack when he found out."

"He even took his shirt to bed with him, he was really proud."

"He comes up with all these crazy ideas, the shirt was all his own design. I thought it was a bit plain but he was adamant he wanted to keep it like that so it was a good job he didn't listen to me. It brought a tear to my eye and made the hairs stand up on the back of my neck, it was a great day."

More than 25 schools took part across the area, producing innovative designs. The judges, two Fine Arts graduates from Derby University, said they were impressed with the standard of the work and admitted they had a hard job picking a winner in each age category.

The designs were quite complex and have been produced by a specialist rugby shirt manufacturer to ensure the design was not compromised in the production process. One of the shirts was presented to Jack by the Royal British Legion and another will be raffled off by the Jubilee Academy.

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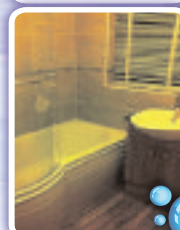
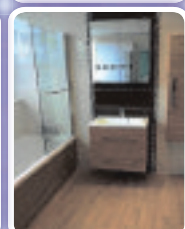
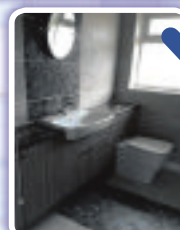
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Alan's fitting tribute as family garden unveiled

WITH its distinctive water feature and hanging tree stars it is a fitting tribute to a man who loved the outdoors.

Alan Titchmarsh and his Love Your Garden TV team have transformed the garden of former Walsall Council parks manager Gareth Perrins-Seedhouse, who died from cancer last year, aged 38.

Gareth's wife Nina, who also works at Walsall Council, was able to enlist the support of Titchmarsh after applying through the WAY (Widowed and Young) group that she has links with.

The family was selected by the producers from more than 10,000 other applicants because of Gareth's tireless work in the borough, his passion for parks and that his last project was to be for his family. After five days of work the new-look back garden at their home, in Bloxwich, was completed in April.

Enjoying

And the fruits of the team's labour were aired on the TV show. Nina and the couple's three young children Cole, aged seven, Maxi, four and Evie, aged two, are now thoroughly enjoying the green surroundings. The 35 year-old said: "They all love it, everybody likes it."

"It is brilliant, the kids go out there even before school. The reaction has all been positive to it, they are all so happy for me. It is like another room in my house. It feels like Gareth is a part of that garden with the hanging stars. There are bits of Gareth all around the garden." The garden includes a large picture of Palfrey Park, where Gareth helped to lead and secure funds for its transformation into a green flag status visitor attraction - the highest accolade awarded to parks. There is also a raised bed for herbs, fruit and vegetable and space has



Alan Titchmarsh with Nina in the show



The garden is unveiled to Nina



Nina Perrins-Seedhouse, with her sons Cole, aged seven, right, and Maxi, four

been set aside for his spade to hang on show. A seating area made of pallets is also in the new-look space.

Nina said she was shocked to be chosen and its appearance was something Gareth would have approved of. It had been his intention to create a dream garden for his family himself.

"I had no idea whatsoever, I was sitting on Gareth's memorial bench in King George V playing fields in Bloxwich - when someone in a hat came to sit on the bench by me, he took his hat

off and that's when I realised it was Alan Titchmarsh. He knew all about the work Gareth had done for 'Clean and Green' and all of the projects Gareth had managed and secured funding for as part of his role.

"Alan said that they would have had a lot in common, as he had started out as a park ranger just like my husband did, too. I cannot put in to words what Alan and his team have given to us. The children now have a wonderful play area and I have a sanctuary."



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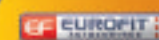
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What's in a name over devolution?

DANIEL WAINWRIGHT
Political Editor



Andy Street, chairman of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP

JUST when we thought Greater Birmingham was deadlier than disco, it rears its head all over again.

If the West Midlands cannot even agree on what to call itself, talk of devolution is pointless.

To most people, the argument itself is the most mind numbingly dull and uninspiring of all.

It is, at its most basic, a question of Whitehall relinquishing its iron grip over funding and powers and letting local communities make the decision.

But it matters. It's about how much we get compared with the emerging Northern Powerhouse and the ever-expanding south east.

Once we've settled on a name we can get into all sorts of arguments over what those powers should be, whether or not the looming combined authority will replace or supercede any functions of local councils and lance the ever-present boil of a directly elected metro mayor.

Billing

Council leaders tried to do that with the dull as ditch water 'does-what-it-says-on-the-tin' name of West Midlands Combined Authority.

No-one takes top billing and none of the cities involved – Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Coventry and even, potentially, Lichfield – can claim they are being sidelined over someone else, while the metropolitan boroughs of Walsall, Sandwell, Dudley, Solihull and various other districts don't feel hard-done-by either.

The problem is businesses, who will have seats at the table, don't seem

to like it. It was no surprise to hear Andy Street, chairman of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership say that Birmingham should be in the title.

That LEP, by the way, proves that whatever anyone in the Black Country thinks, the title of Greater Birmingham will not go away. But when it comes from businessman Mike Dell, who is leading the Black Country Chamber of Commerce Devolution Group, alarm bells start to ring.

He says: "The name 'Birmingham' is recognised on the world stage, West Midlands is not, and we do not want to be trying to explain where we are. It is important that we put aside parochial perspectives and work together." But people don't like it. Not around here anyway.

For the Greater Brum LEP, business leaders can argue that what's good for the city is good for the districts as many people work in one and live in the other.

But that argument doesn't wash in the Black Country.

Mike Dell is absolutely right that people need to work together.

What no-one can really answer is how much, exactly, is in it for each individual area.

Nor can they really say what it will eventually turn into or who is going to run it.

They can't because they're still defending their decision to not call it Greater Birmingham.

And until we get past that, the devil will stay hidden amid the real detail no-one's talking about.

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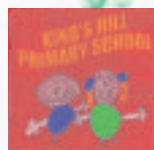


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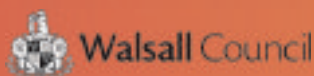
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fast the ticket

Roll Up! Roll Up!

Brian Conley
is Barnum
Page 23



All that jazz

Brum's International
jazz festival – Page 23



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Camper Jam



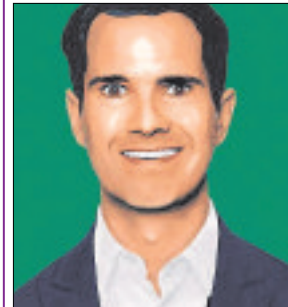
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 Camper Jam is a family friendly, fun filled show with a chilled out, take it easy vibe. Highlights include live bands, children's activities and the "cooking in a camper" competition. Visit www.camperjam.com

Moscow State Circus



Wed - July 12
Merry Hill Centre, Dudley
 The Moscow State Circus returns to the UK with its latest and greatest production to date. Zhelaniy is based on the Russian folklore story of the flower with seven colours. Visit www.moscowstatecircus.com

Jimmy Carr



Saturday, 8pm
Symphony Hall, B'ham
 By popular demand Carr has added this extra date to his current tour, Funny Business. Come for the witty and incisive musings on the human condition; stay for the cheap gags. Visit www.thsh.co.uk

Mary J Blige



Friday, 7.30pm
Barclaycard Arena, B'ham
 Global superstar and undisputed queen of contemporary soul Mary J Blige follows her show-stealing performance alongside Sam Smith at the 2015 Grammy Awards with a new tour. Visit www.barclaycardarena.co.uk

ROCK & POP

Mary J. Blige
 Fri at 7.30pm,
 £40.08 - £56.95
 Barclaycard Arena,
 Birmingham, B1 2AA.
 Call 0121 780 4141

Fleetwood Mac
 Sat at 8pm, £56.70 - £135.70
 Genting Arena, Birmingham,
 B40 1NT.
 Call 0121 780 4141

The Wall Of Floyd
 Fri at 7.30pm,
 £16.75 - £18.75
 Palace Theatre, Alcester Street,
 Redditch, B98 8AE.
 Call 01527 65203

The Billy Fury Years
 Fri at 7.30pm, £18
 Prince Of Wales Centre,
 Cannock, WS11 1DE.
 Call 01543 578762

Paul Carrack - Rain or Shine
 Fri at 7.30pm, £25 - £27.50
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
 Call 01902 401211

Respublica
 Sat at 7pm,
 O2 Academy Birmingham,
 B1 1DB.
 Call 0121 622 8250

Biohazard
 Wed at 7pm, £16.50
 Wolverhampton Slade Rooms,
 WV1 1HP.
 Call 01902 552106

COUNTRY & FOLK

Nothing to Prove
 Fri at 8.30pm, £4 - £5
 Ashwood Marina Ltd,
 Kingswinford, DY6 0AQ.
 Call 01384 27996

Andrew & Lynn
 Fri at 8.30pm, £6
 The Five Ways Inn,
 Cannock, WS12 3HU.
 Call 01543 279022

Common Folk Double Bill
 Thu at 8.30pm,
 Pelsall Cricket & Sports Club,
 Walsall Road, Walsall, WS3 4BP.
 Call 01922 262018

Country Music Nights
 Sun at 8.15pm, £2
 Swan With Two Necks,
 London, WS15 4PN.
 Call 01543 491570

Simon & Garfunkel
 Thu at 7.30pm, £1 - £12.50
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ.
 Call 01902 401211

Irish Session
 Wed at 8pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

Sandpiper Folk Club Night
 Wed at 7.45pm,
 Pigot Arms, 11 High Street,
 Pattingham,
 Wolverhampton, WV6 7BQ.
 Call 01902 700207

Brewood Acoustic Club
 Thu at 8pm,
 Brewood Cricket Club, Four
 Ashes Road, Brewood,
 ST19 9HX.
 Call 01902 850422

CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

Bette Midler
 Thu at 8pm, £56.95 - £110.70
 Barclaycard Arena,
 Birmingham, B1 2AA.
 Call 0121 780 4141

Graduates Summer Concert
 Sun at 4pm - 5pm,
 Selly Manor Museum,
 Bournville, Birmingham,
 B30 1UB.
 Call 0121 472 0199

Royal Opera: Guillaume Tell
 Sun at 2.45pm, £10 - £18
 Light House, Wolverhampton,
 WV1 1HT.
 Call 01902 716055

Redditch Orchestra
 Sat at 7.30pm, £10 - £12
 Artix, Bromsgrove, B61 1PQ.
 Call 01527 577330

Harp & A Monkey - The Great War: New Songs and Stories
 Mon at 8pm
 Stafford Gatehouse,
 ST16 2LT
 Call 01785 619080

Carducci Quartet
 Sat at 10.30am
 Symphony Hall,
 Birmingham, B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 345 0600

2015 Britant International Piano Competition, Birmingham: The Final
 Sat at 3pm
 Town Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 345 0600

Wagner's The Flying Dutchman
 Sun at 4pm
 £9.50 - £50
 Symphony Hall, Birmingham,
 B1 2EA. Call 0121 345 0600

JAZZ & BLUES

The Beat Brothers
 Sat, 7/30pm
 The Jam House, 3-5 St Pauls
 Square, Birmingham, B31QU.
 Call 0121 200 3030

Karyn White
 Tue, 7.30pm
 The Jam House, 3-5 St Pauls
 Square, Birmingham, B31QU.
 Call 0121 200 3030

King Pleasure & the Biscuit Boys
 Thu, 7.30pm
 The Jam House, 3-5 St Pauls
 Square, Birmingham, B31QU.
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The Pasadena Roof Orchestra
 Wed at 7.30pm,
 £18.25 - £19.75
 Palace Theatre, Alcester Street,
 Redditch, B98 8AE.
 Call 01527 65203

Lee Jones Quintet
 Fri at 5pm, Free
 Symphony Hall Cafe Bar
 Birmingham, B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 345 0600

Ella Fitzgerald Songbook
 Fri, 7.30pm
 £12.50 - £44
 Symphony Hall,
 Birmingham, B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 345 0600

MFY National Festival
 Tue - July 10
 Venues and times vary
 Symphony Hall,
 Birmingham, B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 345 0600

THEATRE

Barnum
 Tue, Wed, Thu at 7.30pm, Wed at
 2pm, £19.50 - £48.50
 Birmingham Hippodrome,
 B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Meet the Gruffalo!
 Sat at 10.30am, £3
 Palace Theatre, Alcester Street,
 Redditch, B98 8AE.
 Call 01527 65203

Oklahoma!
 Fri, Sat at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
 £18 - £40
 Birmingham Hippodrome,
 B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Dead Simple
 Fri, Sat at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
 £11.25 - £38.90
 New Alexandra Theatre,
 Birmingham, B5 4DS.
 Call 0844 871 3011

Cyrano de Bergerac
 Sat at 7.45pm, Sun at 2.45pm,
 Tue, Wed, Thu at 7.45pm,
 £6 - £12.50
 The Crescent Theatre,
 Sheepcote Street, Birmingham,
 B16 8AE. Call 0121 643 5858

The Mousetrap
 Fri, Sat at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm,
 £11.50 - £29.50
 Wolverhampton Grand Theatre,
 WV1 1DE.
 Call 01902 573320

Vocalize Variety Show
 Sat at 2pm, 7pm,
 £10.75 - £12.75
 Palace Theatre, Alcester Street,
 Redditch, B98 8AE.
 Call 01527 65203

Honk! The Musical
 Wed, Thu at 2.30pm/7.30pm
 Stafford Gatehouse, ST16 2LT
 Call 01785 619080

NT Live: Man & Superman
 Sun at 2pm, £11 - £19.50
 mac, Cannon Hill Park,
 Birmingham, B12 9QH.
 Call 0121 446 3232

NT Live: Man & Superman
 Fri at 7pm
 Stafford Gatehouse, ST16 2LT
 Call 01785 619080

DANCE

Worcestershire Schools' Dance
 Tue at 4pm, £5.75 - £10.75
 Palace Theatre, Alcester Street,
 Redditch, B98 8AE.
 Call 01527 65203

COMEDY

Jimmy Carr
 Sat at 8pm, £25
 Symphony Hall,
 Birmingham, B1 2EA.
 Call 0121 345 0600

The Best in Live Stand-Up Comedy
 Fri, Sat at 7pm, £5 - £18.50
 The Glee Club, 70 Hurst Street,
 Birmingham,
 B5 4TD.
 Call 0871 472 0400

CRAFT & WORKSHOPS

Children's Weekend Activities
 Sat at 10.30am - 4.30pm,
 £2 - £4.50
 The Museum Of Carpet,
 Kidderminster, DY10 1AZ.
 Call 01562 69028

You Crafty Thing!
 Thu at 10.30am - 12.30pm,
 £3
 The Museum Of Cannock Chase,
 Hednesford,
 Cannock, WS12 1TD.
 Call 01543 877666

Nifty Knitters
 Fri at 11am - 1pm, £1
 The Oak House Museum, Oak
 Road, West Bromwich,
 B70 8HU
 Call 0121 553 0759

OPEN MICS & OTHER EVENTS

Open Mic Night
 Mon at 8.30pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

The Quiz
 Tue at 7.30pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

Irish Session
 Wed at 8pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston,
 Stourbridge, DY8 3TB.
 Call 01384 374410

Rebel Rebel Weekends
 Fri, Sat at 8pm, Free
 The Flapper, Kingston Row,
 Birmingham, B1 2NU.
 Call 0121 236 2421

Sunday Shenanigans - Open Mic night
 Sun at 8pm - 12pm, Free
 Moochers, Stourbridge,
 DY8 1PH.
 Call 01384 671141

TALKS & LECTURES

An Introduction to Beekeeping
 Sat at 12pm - 2pm, £15
 Selly Manor Museum,
 Bournville, Birmingham,
 B30 1UB.
 Call 0121 472 0199

FAMILY/DAYS OUT

Camper Jam
 Fri, Sat, Sun, £15 on the gate
 Weston Park, nr Shifnal,
 TF11 8LE.
 Call 01244 881 895

Cadbury World Summer Fun
 Fri, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu at 10am
 - 3pm, Sat, Sun at 9.30am - 4pm,
 £11.95 - £15.95
 Cadbury World, Linden Road,
 Bournville, Birmingham, B30 2LU.
 Call 0844 880 7667

Contemporary Craft Markets
 Sun at 11am - 5pm, Free
 mac, Cannon Hill Park,
 Birmingham, B12 9QH.
 Call 0121 446 3232

Power Loom Demonstration
 Sat, Tue at 12pm - 1pm, £2 -
 £4.50
 The Museum Of Carpet,
 Kidderminster, DY10 1AZ.
 Call 01562 69028

Master Gilder at Work
 Fri, Tue at 10am - 3pm,
 £5 - £6
 Museum Of Royal Worcester,
 WR1 2ND.
 Call 01905 21247

Family History Buddy
 Wed at 9.30am - 1pm, 1.45pm -
 5pm, Free
 Walsall Local History Centre,
 WS2 7AS. Call 01922 721305

1600s Gardening Group
 Tue at 10am - 1pm, Free
 The Oak House Museum, West
 Bromwich, B70 8HU.
 Call 0121 553 0759

Coffee Mornings
 Fri, Sat, Thu at 2pm - 5pm,
 £2
 Wednesbury Museum & Art
 Gallery, WS10 7DF.
 Call 0121 556 0683

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Swing into action with world of jazz



Florence Joelle, seen performing at Brindleyplace, is singing at this year's jazz festival. Picture by Merlin Dalemam

THE 31st annual Birmingham Jazz and Blues Festival swings into action tomorrow (Friday) for ten days of world-class music with 177 live performances in 78 venues across the city — most of them free admission.

Musicians from the UK and France, Luxembourg, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Australia and the USA will be descending on Brum with events also taking place in Sandwell, Sutton Coldfield and Solihull.

Festival director Jim Simpson said: "This year promises to be one of our most exciting festivals to date with a daily average of 36 hours of free jazz and blues."

The international acts include France's Florence Joelle (pictured above) and Les Zauto Stompers de Paris (pictured front), Italy's Pepper & The Jellies, the Stockholm Stompers, UK regulars like Digby Fairweather and Val Wiseman plus

domestic newcomers Harpers Ferry, Blues Engine and Ella Squirrel.

There will also be talks, a movie season including the first Midlands screening for Amy Winehouse documentary Amy, and a pop-up dance hall at Regency Wharf, plus a drum masterclass with Peter York from the Spencer Davis Group and performances by the Chinese Jitterbug Squad. For programme details see www.birminghamjazzfestival.com



The ultimate entertainer

WHEN you think of natural entertainers, Brian Conley quickly springs to mind. The star is currently in his element playing the role of America's greatest showman Phineas T Barnum in the exhilarating musical, Barnum, which opens at Birmingham Hippodrome on Tuesday for a month-long run.

The musical follows the dreams of Barnum and his marriage to Chairy, the woman who made his wishes come true. "Everything about Barnum is wonderful and I'm honoured to be a part of it with such a great cast," said Conley.

The production even calls upon Conley to use his magic skills and walk a tightrope and the entertainer is full of praise for the original showman.

"He was a wonderful showman, it was his idea to have the three ring circus; he went into politics; he had an affair; lost millions; got millions. It's a fantastic story with a circus background, lots of colour, lots of high comedy, and some of the best songs, I think, in musical theatre."

Barnum's wife on stage is Linzi Hateley who was in the revivals of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, Oliver and Les Miserables. Linzi said: "I'm originally from Tamworth, so it's very nice to hear accents that are recognisable."

Cy Coleman's exuberant score includes the songs Come Follow The Band, The Colours Of My Life and There Is A Sucker Born Ev'ry Minute.

For tickets see www.birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.

Young Rep premiere social media satire

BIRMINGHAM Repertory Theatre's youth theatre, The Young Rep, is to stage the premiere of the debut play by Bournville's Grace Barrington, a former member of Young Rep.

Innovative comedy Me At The Zoo is a timely look at how some people project themselves via social media. The former Kings Norton Girls' School student says: "I hope that Me At The Zoo highlights a lot of problems that are manifesting within the Internet."

Meet At The Zoo, directed by Tom Mansfield, is at The Door venue on Tuesday and Wednesday Tickets are £6, concessions available, see birmingham-rep.co.uk or call 0121 236 4455.

Wonder Stuff and Twang join forces

TWO of the West Midlands' top indie rock bands are joining forces for a double headliner gig at the Wulfrun Hall on Sunday.

The Wonder Stuff and The Twang will appear at the Wolverhampton venue after they were originally due to feature at a proposed weekend rock festival at Dudley Castle which didn't reach fruition.

Promoted by popular indie club night Blast Off, tickets are £25 plus booking free. The Wonder Stuff had hits with Size Of A Cow and Caught in My Shadow in 1991 and The Twang went top ten with Either Way in 2007. See www.wolvescivic.co.uk or call 0870 320 7000.

Swim Deep dive in to the summer

BIRMINGHAM rising stars Swim Deep nod to 'Madchester' and psychedelic pop with their summer single One Great Song And I Could Change The World.

Released through Chess Club/RCA, the new track further reveals the band's fresh sound for forthcoming second album, Mothers, being released on September 19. That will be the follow up to 2013's debut Where The Heaven Are We.

Including last single To My Brother, the new album is the first as a five-piece after James Balmont joined. Singer Austin Williams said: "We've called it 'Mothers' as a nod to the true creators of the universe."

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Quality with lot of choice

After opening earlier this year, Giorgios restaurant in Bridgetown, Cannock, is filling a gap – in more ways than one

I'm on a seafood diet – I see food and I eat it. Or so the saying goes.

That could be no more evident than during my recent visit to Giorgios's Greek and Mediterranean restaurant in Cannock.

And, while the economy in Greece may not be in the best of shape, the same could not be said for Giorgios's, the likes of which Cannock has been crying out for for a number of years.

Situated in Bridge Street, Bridgetown, it is ideally placed, right next door to the landmark Ramada Hotel. Staff say hotel guests are regular customers, while passing trade comes from motorists driving along the A5, and work parties from other nearby business estates are often seen on nights out there, as on our visit.

But on particular busy nights, when diners may have to wait for a seat, there's a twist – there's a bar next door which also allows for private functions.

Plentiful

Catering for more than 120 diners, Giorgios's has an open-plan kitchen, while the walls are tastefully decorated with a scene from a Greek island that could make one think they were actually there. There's no smashing plates at the end, though.

Yet the restaurant is still in its infancy, having only opened in the new year.

Vinny Singh, a partner in the business, says patience is needed when trying to get a business off the ground, attracting the right clientele and finding the right ingredients.

Patience was certainly needed when my partner and I dropped in. The helpings were so plentiful that a lot of time was required to finish them off. And even when it proved too



A taste of the Mediterranean – Giorgios's can cater for more than 120 diners and is tastefully decorated



The restaurant is ideally placed next to the landmark Ramada Hotel

much, six extra people can vouch for its excellence, having been treated to a mini-feast at the office the next day.

In manager Dimitri Constaninedes, customers could not wish for a more genial host.

He is readily on hand to explain what is offered on the menu and what the dishes contain, although the menu itself does describe the fare, and vegetarian dishes are clearly marked.

Sadly, there was no humus or taramasalata

because of a 'double dip' recession. I joke, of course – there was tzatziki, too, served among our starters, which included many things I couldn't even spell, never mind pronounce. After all, it's all Greek to me.

Prices start at £3.50 for the appetisers, which all come with pitta bread and olives. A bargain deal is the Greek/Cypriot special, a meze, which comprises a mix of starters and main for £16.95 for a minimum of two people.

And, it's fair to say, we tried our hand at

most of what was on offer. Mains, including the traditional moussaka, are served with savoury potatoes, savoury rice and salad.

The pick for me was the souviaka, the tender beef stifado the kleftiko – described as the restaurant's signature dish – and the grilled halloumi cheese. Just the smell has the senses working overtime.

Helping these to go down was the Greek beer Mythos. After all, when in Rome . . . or Athens. Or in this case Bridgetown.

But that wasn't all. Puddings were delivered, and followed by the piece de resistance or whatever the Greek equivalent is – a glass of the fortified mavrodaphne wine, which simply hit the spot.

All in all, a smashing time was had by all – without any broken crockery.

Giorgios's is open seven days a week, from 6pm Monday to Saturday and 3pm on Sunday. To book, call 01543 573861.

Mark Shipp

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DIGITAL

GARDEN

CHOICE



Emily Watson

A Song for Jenny (BBC1, 9pm)

Drama, based on Julie Nicholson's book of the same name, which explores her response to her daughter's death at Edgware Road tube station in the July 7 bombings. The rollercoaster of emotions experienced by Julie and her family after the attack is explored; from hope, denial and acceptance, to grief and the desire to honour Jenny. The programme coincides with the forthcoming 10th anniversary of the 7/7 bombings in London and is a tribute to those who lost their lives in the attack. Emily Watson, Gwilym Lee, Steven Mackintosh, Nicola Wren, Martha Mackintosh, Laurence Belcher, Alan Rothwell, June Watson, Anne Stallybrass and John Woodvine star.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 9.00 The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** Live Formula 1: British Grand Prix. Suzi Perry presents coverage of the race at Silverstone (Start-time 1.00pm). **3.30** Pried Apart. (R) **4.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.00** Songs of Praise. Claire McCollum hears stories of faith in an episode marking the 10th anniversary of the July 7th London bombings, while Pam Rhodes meets Christians from Korea touring the UK. **5.35** Nature's Greatest Dancers. Steve Backshall examines dances that are necessary for animals' survival, featuring footage of lemurs, shrews, toads and whales, with music including Oily Murs and the Bee Gees.

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. Matt Baker looks for basking sharks off the Cornish coast and scours the shoreline for shark egg cases. Ellie Harrison visits a project to map the entire UK coastline and learns about stinging nettles. John Craven reports on links between Cornish food producers and the Eden project. Tom Heap explores the county's underground resources, and Adam Henson meets some African agricultural experts visiting the UK, including Weather for the Week Ahead.

8.00 Fake or Fortune? New series. Fiona Bruce and art experts Philip Mould and Bendor Grosvenor come to the aid of a man who has inherited three paintings and needs to prove they are by LS Lowry.

9.00 A Song for Jenny. An exploration of Julie Nicholson's reaction to her daughter's death during the July 7 bombings in London. Adapted from Nicholson's book, and starring Emily Watson.

10.20 BBC News.

10.40 Regional Programme.

10.50 Live at the Apollo. Alan Carr hosts the stand-up show at London's Hammersmith Apollo, introducing routines by comedians Andi Osho and Patrick Kielty. (R)

11.35 Don't Tell the Bride. A hard-rocking groom-to-be plans a Guns N' Roses-themed wedding, unaware that his wife-to-be is not quite the metal-head he believes her to be. (R)

12.35 Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.40** BBC News.

BBC2

6.15 Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **7.15** Big Dreams Small Spaces. (R) **8.15** Countryfile. (R) **9.15** Gardeners' World. (R) **9.45** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.15** F1 Rewind – Great Britain: Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.20** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.20** Athletics. **2.20** Live Athletics. The British Championships.

6.00 Film: John Carter. (2012) An American Civil War soldier is transported to an alien planet, which is also being torn apart by conflict. He intercedes in this struggle after rescuing a princess from captivity, and must win the trust of a fierce primitive tribe to save the world. Fantasy adventure based on Edgar Rice Burroughs' series of novels, starring Taylor Kitsch and Lynn Collins. Edited for daytime broadcast.

8.00 Best of Top Gear. Motoring magazine, featuring test drives of the latest models.

9.00 Odyssey. Now captive in Bamako, Odelle has to prove her value to an Ansar Dine interrogator, while Harrison turns to his father for help when he learns he has a connection to Colonel Glen.

9.45 Family Guy. New series. The Griffin family find themselves stuck in Springfield, home to The Simpsons, after fleeing Quahog when Peter faces a backlash over a misogynistic comic strip.

10.25 Family Guy. The residents of Quahog turn against one another as they become embroiled in a treasure hunt based on Peter's interpretation of a restaurant placemat.

10.50 Family Guy. Peter discovers that he has a vestigial twin growing out of his neck and names him Chip. However, he soon becomes jealous of the attention the new arrival is receiving.

11.10 Family Guy. Quagmire finally meets a woman with a sexual appetite as insatiable as his, but things take a turn for the worse when she makes him her sex slave.

11.30 Match of the Day Live: Women's World Cup. The final (Kick-off 12.00am). Coverage of the match held at BC Place in Vancouver, Canada, as the teams battle it out for the title won by Japan in 2011.

2.30 Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **3.30** Holby City. (R) **4.30** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.15** Sooty. (R) **7.30** Super 4. (R) **7.45** Fish Hooks. **8.00** Young Justice: Invasion. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** ITV News: Weather. **12.40** Love Your Garden. (R) **1.40** Long Lost Family. (R) **2.40** Film: Nanny McPhee and the Big Bang. (2010) Fantasy comedy, starring Emma Thompson. **4.45** Midsomer Murders. (R)

6.45 Regional Programme: Weather. **6.55** ITV News: Weather.

7.15 Catchphrase. Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show in which three contestants guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues, before one of them plays to win £50,000.

8.00 Surprise Surprise. Holly Willoughby makes dreams come true. Featuring a performance by Little Mix, two sisters meeting for the first time, and a detection dog with a surprise for an audience member.

9.00 Black Work. Jo is left reeling as the secrets she has uncovered prove devastating for her family. She decides to abandon her investigation into Ryan's death out of fear she is endangering her children. However, when another body is discovered, she realises that her husband's murderer is still at large, and it is up to her to see that he is brought to justice. But as she takes up the case again, she does not realise that the killer could be terrifyingly close to home. Conclusion of the three-part crime drama, starring Sheridan Smith. Last in the series.

10.00 ITV News: Weather.

10.20 Bear Grylls: Mission Survival. Tensions reach boiling point as the celebrities face their toughest challenge yet, navigating down a powerful river, building shelters, catching food and enduring a tropical storm. (R)

11.20 Piers Morgan's Life Stories: Tomlin. The flamboyant Strictly judge lifts the lid on his life and career as a dancer and choreographer. (R)

12.15 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.45** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.10** Ginetta GT5 Challenge. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.25** Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **3.00** The Simpsons. (R) **3.30** The Simpsons. (R) **4.00** The Simpsons. (R) **4.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.35** A Place in the Sun: Summer Sun.

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Kevin McCloud's Escape to the Wild. Kevin heads toward the Arctic Circle to meet Richard and Claire Rees, an Welsh couple who have given up their jobs and former lives to reside in a basic wooden cabin in the snow-covered forests of northern Sweden. Living off-grid, with no electricity or running water, and facing temperatures that can go as low as minus 30C, simply surviving is a challenge. Kevin helps with the arduous daily tasks of chopping wood and collecting water from under the ice, learning that a cup of coffee can take an hour to make. Last in the series. (R)

8.00 Amazing Spaces Shed of the Year 2015. George Clarke introduces the nominees in the Pub Sheds category, including a pirate-themed structure, a gin distillery, a biker pub that once housed a helicopter and a nightclub with a collection of shrunken heads. He also looks at budget sheds, featuring a hillbilly hut on wheels, a garden pavilion made of firewood, a Nepalese mountain hut and a shed made from the ruins of beach huts.

9.00 Humans. Anita is taken for testing, which yields a surprising revelation. Pete's selfish behaviour drives Jill from the house. Hobb closes in on Niska, and Mattie gets in touch with Leo.

10.00 Film: The Grey. (2011) Eight stranded oil rig workers must make a gruelling journey across the Alaskan tundra, stalked by a pack of ferocious wolves. Adventure, starring Liam Neeson and Frank Grillo.

12.15 Rude Tube. (R) **1.10** Film: The Talented Mr Ripley. (1999) **3.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.45** River Cottage Bites. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Pig Ahoy! (R) **6.45** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.55** Chloë's Closet. (R) **7.05** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.15** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.25** Paw Patrol. **7.40** Mio Mio. (R) **7.45** Little Princess. (R) **8.00** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **8.10** Only the Little White Van. (R) **8.15** Zack and Quack. (R) **8.30** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.40** Jelly Jamm. (R) **8.55** Lazy Town. (R) **9.25** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **9.30** Dora and Friends. **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **10.35** Access. **10.40** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.35** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.40** Film: Kate & Leopold. (2001) Time travel romantic comedy, with Hugh Jackman. **2.50** Film: Entrapment. (1999) Crime thriller, starring Sean Connery. **5.05** Film: Hercules. (1997) Disney animated adventure, with the voice of Tate Donovan.

6.45 5 News Weekend.

6.50 Film: You, Me and Dupree. (2006) Thirtysomething slacker Dupree finds himself out of a job with nowhere to live, and turns to his newly married best friend Carl for a place to stay. But Carl comes to regret his act of hospitality as the layabout shows no sign of ever moving out – not to mention his annoyance when his new wife takes a liking to their laid-back guest. Comedy, starring Owen Wilson, Matt Dillon, Kate Hudson and Michael Douglas. Edited for language and sexual content.

9.00 Big Brother. Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary-room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley.

10.00 Film: A Deadly Adoption. (2015) Premiere. A successful couple take in a pregnant woman, hoping to adopt her baby, but the arrangement has perilous consequences. Thriller spoof, starring Will Ferrell.

11.45 Film: Assumed Killer. (2013) An amnesiac news reporter begins to suspect her husband is the serial killer she was investigating when she lost her memory. Thriller, starring Barbie Castro and Casper Van Dien. Edited for content.

1.30 SuperCasino. **3.10** Big Brother. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 Formula 1: British Grand Prix – Highlights

8.00 Don't Tell the Bride **9.00** Film: Shanghai Knights (2003) **10.45** Russell Howard's Good News **11.45** Family Guy **12.10** American Dad! **12.30** Family Guy **12.55** Sun, Sex and Suspicious Parents **1.55** Uncle 3 **2.25** Russell Howard's Good News **3.55** Great Movie Mistakes V: Revenge of the Fifth **4.00** Close

BBC Four

7.00 Dalai Lama at 80 **7.30** Schonbrunn Summer Night Concert From Vienna **9.00** Pappano's Classic Voices **10.00** Film: Far from the Madding Crowd (1967) **12.40** Dalai Lama at 80 **1.10** Rock 'n' Roll America **2.10** Schonbrunn Summer Night Concert From Vienna **3.40** Close

ITV2

11.30 Take Me Out **12.40** Take Me Out – The Gossip **1.25** Love Island **2.30** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **4.15** Film: The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement (2004) **6.30** Film: Jurassic Park (1993) **9.00** Love Island **10.00** Film: Scary Movie V (2013) **11.50** Fake Reaction **12.30** Love Island **1.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **1.55** Life's Funniest Moments **2.20** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.05 Film: Columbus: Swan Song (1974) **1.20** Goodbye Mr Chips **3.20** Wycliffe **4.35** Film: The Railway Children (1970) **6.50** Inspector Morse **9.00** Joanna Lumley: The Search for Noah's Ark **10.30** Film: The American President (1995) **12.50** Blue Murder **2.05** Cornwall with Caroline Quentin **2.50** Man About the House **3.20** ITV3 Nightscreen **3.40** Emmerdale

ITV4

11.00 The Cycle Show **12.00** Tour de France Highlights **1.00** Tour de France Live. **5.00** Pawn Stars **6.30** Storage Wars: Texas **7.00** Tour de France Highlights **8.00** Greg LeMond: Slaying the Badger **9.50** Movies Now **10.00** Film: The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford (2007) **1.10** Hell on Wheels **2.05** Tour de France Highlights **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

12.00 Couples Come Dine with Me **2.00** Film: Penelope (2006) **3.50** Rude(kill) Tube Shorts **4.00** The Goldbergs **5.00** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.30** Film: The Net (1995) **7.45** Rude(kill) Tube Shorts **8.00** The Big Bang Theory **10.00** Gogglebox **12.05** The IT Crowd **1.15** Tattoo Fixers **2.15** Tattoos After Dark **3.00** My Mad Fat Diary **3.55** Hollyoaks

Film4

11.00 Bend of the River (1952) **1.00** The Parent Trap (1998) **3.40** Earthquake (1974) **6.15** Clear and Present Danger (1994) **9.00** Colombiana (2011) **11.10** The Client (1994) **1.30** Holy Motors (2012) **3.50** Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
The Trail to Hope Rose, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A former outlaw trying to make a fresh start in a mining town is tempted by an old friend to carry out a payroll robbery. Western, starring Lou Diamond Phillips and Ernest Borgnine. Edited for daytime broadcast. (2004)

TUESDAY
Imagine: Beware of Mr Baker, BBC1, 10.35pm
In this award-winning documentary, Cream drummer Ginger Baker reflects on his 60-year career, which began in the jazz clubs of Soho and led to sell-out stadium concerts, via the back streets of Lagos, Nigeria. Director Jay Bulger catches up with the musician at his South African ranch to talk drums, drugs and everything in-between. However, it remains to be seen whether the young film-maker has bitten off more than he can chew. (2012)

WEDNESDAY
The Negotiator, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A desperate mother takes the patients and staff of an entire hospital hostage, demanding a rare experimental drug for her daughter, who is dying of cancer. An FBI agent is assigned to resolve the crisis, but faces a conflict of loyalties when she realises the girl in question is a friend of her own child. Thriller, starring Elisabeth Rohm and Chandra West. (2005)



Hard Target, Friday, ITV, 11.10pm

THURSDAY
Lone Rider, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A veteran of the American Civil War returns to his home town to discover a former friend, who has become a ruthless land baron, is intent on seizing his father's ranch, forcing the hardened soldier to take up arms once more to protect his family and property. Western, starring Lou Diamond Phillips. (2008)

FRIDAY
Hard Target, ITV, 11.10pm
A woman searching for her missing father hires an out-of-work merchant sailor to guide her through the streets of New Orleans, where his martial arts skills are greatly tested in a series of encounters with sadistic hunters of human prey. John Woo's action thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme. (1993)

Horticultural enthusiasts put their skills to the test

Celebrity gardeners have been around almost since TV was invented – after all, Britons do tend to take great pride in their horticultural havens.

Percy Thrower was perhaps the first green-fingered small-screen superstar, and he inspired several generations of youngsters thanks to his appearances on Blue Peter from 1974 to 1987 – some may remember that Percy was behind the creation of the programme's garden at Television Centre.

Other famous faces have come and gone over the years, and during the past couple of decades, a few have tended to have very apt names indeed – think of Alan Titchmarsh, Bob Flowerdew and Pippa Greenwood, and you'll see what we mean; it's almost as if they were born to do a specific job.

Now there's a new name to add to that list, and his moniker is even more fitting than those mentioned above. Anthony Gardner is a garden designer by trade, and he's much in demand, having won numerous awards for his work.

He was also recently diagnosed as having Asperger's syndrome. He believes the condition has helped him get to the top of his profession, and now he wants to find out if others with conditions that, like Asperger's, fall within the autistic syndrome, can excel as horticulturalists too.

"What makes us autists such great gardeners is what goes on in our weirdly wired minds," says Alan. "I want to prove that we're not mad...we just see things in a different way."

"Not a lot of people know that mathematical formulas occur in flowers, stamens, petals, leaves, and from these mathematical sequences you can create patterns to actually construct brilliant gardens."

During this new, four-part programme, he will chart the progress of five people as they join forces to transform neglected plots into something of which even Capability Brown himself would have been proud.

They have just a week to carry out each task, and must stick to a strict budget – but as time and finance are

alien concepts to the participants, that may prove trickier than anybody else could imagine.

Among the team is Thomas, who is 19 and struggles to communicate, but loves the order and precision of horticulture. Charles, meanwhile, is a decade older, has a passion for vegetables and dreams of living entirely off the land.

Philip is 30 and is the group's exotic plant expert; he has more than 60 species of cacti in his collection, while James, 25, is a walking plant encyclopaedia, but can't make eye contact with those around him.

Finally, there's Victoria, who is a 27-year-old with a flair for colour.

The group's first task sees them travel to Ashbourne in Derbyshire, where homeowners Ben and Rebecca have an overgrown wilderness where their back garden should be. What they want in exchange for that is a low-maintenance and fun garden that their entire family can enjoy.

With a budget of £3,000, Alan and the gang set to work – here's hoping their efforts live up to expectations.



Alan Gardener features, The Autistic Gardener, Wednesday, Channel 4, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Vicious
ITV, 9pm
Freddie and Stuart prepare for their big day, but things run far from smoothly with the appearance of an unexpected guest at the wedding, and it's not long before the blissful event becomes a potential disaster. Violet announces that her husband Jasper has returned and warns Ash not to flirt with her in front of him as he is insanely jealous, while Penelope and Mason hit a series of snags when they are sent to collect the wedding cake. Comedy, starring Ian McKellen, Derek Jacobi, Frances de la Tour and Iwan Rheon. Last in the series.

TUESDAY
Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
Channel 4, 8pm
Cleaning obsessives Hayley and Dann head for Plas Teg, a 17th-century Jacobean manor in the heart of Flintshire, north Wales. This 10-bedroom Italian-inspired residence is home to Cornelia and her 12 cats, and is also said to be one of the most haunted houses in Wales. Cornelia is desperate to generate income to restore the Grade I listed building to its former glory, so Hayley and Dann have agreed to spend five days cleaning alongside her, pushing their boundaries and challenging their germ phobia.

Virgin Atlantic
ITV, 9pm
Founded back in June 1984, Virgin Atlantic has just celebrated it's 30th year as one of the world's leading airlines. This documentary series goes behind the scenes of the business, following staff at all levels, from founder Richard Branson, and the Chief Exec to new cabin crew recruits and the boys in the warehouse, as the company rolls out a new plane, new uniforms and new people – and tries to get back in the black. In episode one, we meet the team at the Virgin Atlantic base in Crawley, preparing for the airline's birthday event, as Branson, who founded the airline when he was just 34, makes a rare appearance. Cameras also follow 58-year-old grandmother Katrine, who is hoping to fulfill her lifelong dream of becoming a 'trolley dolly'.

WEDNESDAY
Children of the Gaza War
BBC2, 9pm
During the past six years, children growing up on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have experienced three wars. One of these conflicts,

which took place in 2014 and last 51 days, resulted in the deaths of more than 500 youngsters, all but of them Palestinian. Almost every child in Gaza has lost a family member to the ongoing unrest, while those on the Israeli side of the border live in constant fear of rocket attacks and raids from gunmen using underground tunnels. 'It's no not fair,' says 10-year-old Michal, who lives in a kibbutz less than a mile from the Gaza border. 'Your home is supposed to be the safest place in the world for you, but it's just not true.' He and others like him talks to presenter Lyse Dourcet about their often terrifying experiences.



Frank Skinner: Man in a Suit, Friday, BBC1, 10.35pm

THURSDAY
Grand Designs: Living in the City
Channel 4, 8pm
New series. Kevin McCloud presents the first of four special programmes inspired by 15 years of Grand Designs. He begins with a look at the challenges of self-building in the city, where space is at a premium and architects have to be at their most ingenious. Kevin uses footage from the best urban builds from the show over the years, meets pioneers at the forefront of the latest architectural thinking and looks at clever innovations that continue to transform people's lives to reveal which designs work best and why.

FRIDAY
Frank Skinner: Man in a Suit
BBC1, 10.35pm
For a while, it looked like Frank Skinner was mellowing. On panel shows in particular, he's positively genial, willing to take a back seat and let the guests hog the spotlight on Room 101. But don't let that fool you into thinking that Skinner isn't as sharp as ever, especially when it comes to stand-up. This show was filmed during his 2014 tour, his first in seven years, and finds that while he may have grown up a bit since the laddish days of Fantasy Football, he's still capable of brilliantly funny and occasionally filthy one-liners. The set also finds him musing on the nature of fame, and his own spot in the celebrity pecking order – and if this is show is anything to go by, he'll be at the top of the comedy tree for quite some time.

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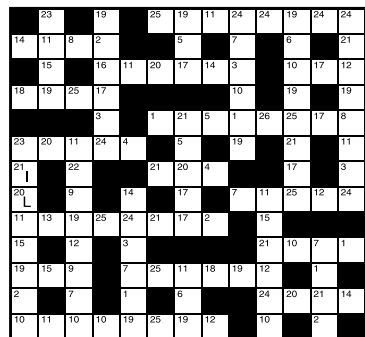
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

K	T	W	S	Y	B	A	Q	J	I	N	R	H
E	D	O	M	P	U	F	G	V	X	L	Z	C

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Reduced to the lowest level (5)
- Fruit is when rain's about (7)
- You might find merit in the meantime (7)
- He lives an ordered existence (5)
- A minor drawback (4)
- Not very bright but in charge of the players (8)
- Regrets the ways of the French (4)
- Fifty-one and single (4)
- It's always torn out with great respect (8)
- Heavenly arts review (4)
- Letter comes from a number unusually late (5)
- Country where men burst into song (7)
- Objects about the French not finishing (7)
- Make fun of one's peers (5)

Down

- It takes over lines of communication (7,6)
- Wood spirit (5)
- Read as a challenge (4)
- Take out a form (6)
- It's not so good, being a subordinate (8)
- Flatter most sincerely (7)
- He may get carried away without knowing it (9,4)
- Shrink - and iron? (8)
- Certainly given no encouragement to save up! (7)
- Inserts in songs (6)
- Singer put right after the wrong note (5)
- A doctor's name (4)

Quick Clues:

Across

- Protect (5)
- Take prisoner (7)
- Umpire (7)
- Deign (5)
- Moist (4)
- Gift (8)
- Lash (4)
- Dash (4)
- Amount (8)
- Dreadful (4)
- Ethics of a community (5)
- Train (7)
- Torture (7)
- Clothing (5)

Down

- Bombastic (13)
- Set of records (5)
- Function (4)
- Box (6)
- Fairly good (8)
- Ideal (7)
- High cost (13)
- Aversion (8)
- Climate (7)
- Road (6)
- Angry (5)
- Store (4)

Sudoku

		3			5	7		
9			3				2	
	2			4			3	6
		3	4	7		6		1
	8						9	
4	1			8	9	3		
5			8			1		
	2			3			4	8
			5	4			7	

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	5	2	8	4	9	6	3	7
6	7	9	3	5	1	8	2	4
4	8	3	7	2	6	1	5	9
7	9	8	6	1	2	5	4	3
3	4	5	9	8	7	2	1	6
2	1	6	5	3	4	9	7	8
9	6	4	2	7	5	3	8	1
5	3	7	1	9	8	4	6	2
8	2	1	4	6	3	7	9	5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 3 Protester; 6 Floor; 9 Palatable; 10 Reefer; 11 Harem; 14 Skier; 15 Warm; 16 Sedan; 18 Land; 20 Olive; 21 Souls; 24 Slight; 25 Took place; 26 Shoe; 27 Gradients. Down: 1 Sparks fly; 2 Comedians; 4 Plead; 5 Tiers; 6 Seaweed; 7 Eels; 9 Peers; 11 Hides; 12 Making the; 13 Amnesties; 17 Noble; 19 Docked; 22 Lile; 23 Moor; 24 Scot. QUICK - Across: 3 Slumbered; 8 Loop; 9 Fabricate; 10 Origin; 11 Chasm; 14 Amish; 15 Save; 16 Tibia; 18 Cite; 20 Range; 21 Exude; 24 Mentor; 25 Ingenious; 26 Edit; 27 Fertility. Down: 1 Allowance; 2 Novitiate; 4 Lean; 5 March; 6 Excess; 7 Eats; 9 First; 11 Cable; 12 Magnitude; 13 Desecrate; 17 Anies; 19 Expect; 22 Drill; 23 Once; 24 Must.

Quiz

- Which poet wrote Paradise Lost?
- Who was the eldest son of Queen Victoria?
- Which Welsh actor was born Richard Jenkins in 1925?
- How did bank robber Ned Kelly die?
- When was the first London to Brighton veteran car rally?
- With which item of clothing would you associate Mary Phelps Jacob?
- Which Apollo 12 astronauts made the second moon landing?
- On what date was the Anglo-Irish Agreement signed?
- What is the Sooner state of the U.S.A.?
- Where is the Sea of Rains?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Martin Luther King; 2 Andy Warhol; 3 Potomac; 4 Capricorn; 5 Herbert George; 6 Mars; 7 Sweden; 8 Austria; 9 Murder; 10 1941.

Niner: SIGNATURE

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

1697 gives an insect,
4569 gives an animal,
83258 gives a fish.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Thinking space



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OIRO £85,000

CORNWALL PLACE, WALSALL
Two Bed Ground Floor Flat. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Modern Fitted Kitchen & Shower Room. D/G. G/C/H. Paved Fore Garden & Private Garden To Rear With Brick Built Outhouse.

SHORT HEATH



£90,000

FARMHOUSE WAY, W'HALL
Three Bed Mid Town House. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Modern Fitted Kitchen/ Diner And Family Bathroom. D/G. Part G/C/H. Gardens To Both The Front And Rear. Great BTL or FTB.

DARLASTON



£92,500

PERRY STREET, WEDNESBURY
Three Bedroom Mid Terrace. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Spacious Lounge, Separate Dining Room, Modern Fitted Kitchen And Family Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Enclosed Rear Garden. MUST VIEW!

WILLENHALL



£110,000

THE CRESCENT, WILLENHALL
Modern Two Bed Semi. Comprises Lounge With Open Plan Staircase, Kitchen/Diner, Conservatory And Family Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Block Paved Driveway. Enclosed Rear Garden.

BENTLEY



£110,000

EDINBURGH AVE, WALSALL
Two Bed Semi. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen & Ground Floor W.C. 1st Floor Bathroom. D/G & G/C/H. Off Road Parking To The Front & Enclosed Garden To The Rear.

WILLENHALL



O.I.R.O £120,000

BIRCHES RISE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Mid Town. Comprises Of Entrance Porch, Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/Diner And Family Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Gardens To Front & Rear. Allocated Off Road Parking Space. VIEWING ADVISED!

WILLENHALL



£124,995

LISTER STREET, WILLENHALL
Three Bed End Town House. Comprises Of Porch, Inner Hall, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Generous Lounge, Separate Dining Room, Sun Room & Family Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. O/R/P To The Fore & Enclosed Garden To Rear.

KINGFISHER ESTATE



£149,995

WELLAND GROVE, W'HALL
Three Bedroom Detached. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom. D/ Glazed, G/C/H. Gardens To Front & Rear, Driveway & Garage.

WEDNESFIELD



£149,995

BROAD LANE SOUTH, W-FIELD
Three Bed Semi. Comprising Of Entrance Porch, Through Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom, D/ Glazing, C/Heating, Rear Garden And Driveway To Front And Side.

COPPICE FARM



£199,995

LOCHALSH GR, WILLENHALL
Four Bed Detached. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Open Plan Lounge/Diner, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor W.C, En-Suite Shower To Master & Family Bathroom. G/C/H. Driveway & Garage. Front & Rear Gardens.

SHORT HEATH



£270,000

MILL LANE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Detached Bungalow With One Bed Annex. Comprises Of Hall, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen, Family Bathroom. The Annex Comprises Of Lounge, Kitchen/ Diner & Bedroom With En-Suite Shower Room.

POOL HAYES



£280,000

RAVENSCROFT RD, W'HALL
Four Bed Detached. Comprises Of Porch, Entrance Hall, Sitting Room, 24ft Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Utility & Ground Floor W.C. First Floor Has Bathroom & W.C. Two Driveways & Garages. Extensive Rear Gardens.

BENTLEY



WESTERN AVE, WALSALL
Three Bed Mid Town House. Comprises Entrance Porch, Hall, Lounge, Inner Hall, Kitchen, Bathroom, D/G & E/H. Outside There Is A Secure Gated Parking Space And EXCELLENT BTL OR FTB! £85,000

WILLENHALL



LISTER STREET, WILLENHALL
Immaculate Two Bed Ground Floor Apartment. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Bathroom, D/G & E/H. Outside There Is A Secure Gated Parking Space And Garage. MUST VIEW! £89,995

DARLASTON



HORTON PLACE, WEDNESBURY
Three Bed Mid Town House. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/Diner, Ground Floor Bathroom, Separate W.C And First Floor Shower Room. D/G. G/C/H. Front & Rear Gardens. Off Road Parking. OIRO £90,000

DARLASTON



BOOTH STREET, WEDNESBURY
Two Bedroom Mid Town House. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/Diner And Family Bathroom. G/C/H. Enclosed Rear Garden. Two Allocated Parking Spaces To Rear. £90,000

REEDSWOOD



PARKVIEW CRES, WALSALL
Three Bed Semi. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Area, Fitted Kitchen, Guest W.C & Family Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Detached Garage. Driveway To Front & Side. Enclosed Garden To Rear. £109,995

WILLENHALL



TEMPLE ROAD, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Semi. Comprises Of Porch, Entrance Hall, Lounge/Diner, Modern Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor W.C & First Floor Shower Room. D/G. G/C/H. O/R/P To Fore. Enclosed Rear Garden. MUST VIEW! £109,995

SHORT HEATH



SHERLOCK CLOSE, WILLENHALL
Well Presented Two Bed End Townhouse. Comprises Entrance Hall, Kitchen, Spacious Lounge, Conservatory, Family Bathroom, CH, Parking To The Fore, Enclosed Garden To The Rear. £119,950

ROCKET POOL



MELDON DRIVE, BILSTON
Three Bed Mid Townhouse. Comprising Entrance Hall, Through Lounge/Diner, Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory, Family Bathroom, Extensive Rear Gardens & Block Paved Driveway To Fore. Must View! £119,995

POOL HAYES



LUCKNOW ROAD, W'HALL
Immaculately Presented & Extended Two Bed Semi. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, W/C, Shower Room, D/G & C/H. Off Road Parkino. Generous Garden To Rear. £117,500

SHORT HEATH



STOURMORE CLOSE, W'HALL
Three Bed Semi Detached. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Lounge/Diner, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Driveway Parking & A Garage To The Fore With An Enclosed Garden To Rear. £140,000

BENTLEY



MONMOUTH ROAD, WALSALL
Two Bed Detached Bungalow. Comprises Of Entrance Hall, Fitted Kitchen, Lounge, 26ft Sun Room & Shower Room. D/G. G/C/H. Extensive Off Road Parking To Fore & Enclosed Garden To Rear. MUST VIEW! O.I.R.O £160,000

WOODLANDS



HUNTS LANE, WILLENHALL
Extended Four Bed Semi Detached. Comprises Of Fitted Kitchen, Spacious Lounge/Diner, Conservatory, Ground Floor Bedroom, Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Off Road Parkino. Generous Plot. £165,000

THE HAYES



CASTLE DRIVE, WILLENHALL
Three/Four Bed Link Detached. Comprises Of Lounge, Kitchen/ Diner, Ground Floor W.C & Bedroom. Three First Floor Bedrooms & Jack And Jill Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Driveway & Garage. Rear Garden. £165,000

COPPICE FARM



HIGHMOOR CLOSE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Detached. Comprises Of Lounge, Separate Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen, Family Bathroom, D/ Glazing, C/Heating, Garage, Block Paved Driveway And Enclosed Rear Garden. £169,995

WILLENHALL



BILSTON LANE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Detached. Comprises Of Porch, Hall, Guest W.C, Lounge, Spacious Kitchen/Diner, Veranda & Family Bathroom. Maj D/G. G/C/H. Garden To Fore. O/R/P Extensive Gardens To Rear. £185,000

SHORT HEATH



BLOXWICH RD NTH, W'HALL
Detached Three Bed Having Entrance Porch, Hall, Lounge With Inglenook Fireplace, Separate Sitting Room, Conservatory, Fitted Kitchen, Galleried Landing, Family Bathroom, Garage, D/ Glazing, C/ Heating. £270,000

SSTC



GEORGE ROSE GARDENS, DARLASTON
SALE AGREED IN UNDER A MONTH
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED - BUYERS WAITING
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£160,000

SSTC



W'TON RD WEST, BENTLEY
SALE AGREED IN JUST 3 DAYS
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED - BUYERS WAITING
CALL FOR A FREE MARKET APPRAISAL NOW
£160,000

PERRY HALL



HADEN CRES, WEDNESFIELD
Spacious Three Bed Semi. Comprising Entrance Porch, Hall, Sitting Room, Open Plan Kitchen/ Diner, Inner Hallway, Ground Floor W.C, Utility Room, Fitted Family Bathroom, Off Road Parking & Extensive Rear Gardens. Must View! £129,995

WILLENHALL



BELINDA CLOSE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Semi Detached. Comprises Of Spacious Lounge/ Diner, Fitted Kitchen & Family Bathroom. D/G. G/C/H. Off Road Parking & Garage. Front & Rear Gardens. Views Over Memorial Park. VIEWING ADVISED! £129,995

BRACKENDALE



DURSLEY CLOSE, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Semi. Comprises Of Porch, Hall, Through Lounge/Diner, Fitted Kitchen, Bathroom & Loft Room. D/G. G/C/H. Gardens To Front & Rear. Converted Garage (Storage / Play Room). Driveway & Carport. £125,000

SSTC



BROWNING CLOSE, W'HALL
SALE AGREED IN JUST 10 DAYS
SIMILAR PROPERTIES REQUIRED - BUYERS WAITING
CALL FOR A FREE MARKET APPRAISAL NOW
£90,000

NEW INVENTION



ASTORIA GDNS, WILLENHALL
Three Bed Mid Town House. Comprises Of Porch, Entrance Hall, Guest W.C, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen/ Diner And Shower Room. D/G. G/C/H. Gardens To Front And Rear As Well As An Off Road Parking Area. Great FTB or BTL. £88,500

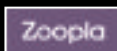
SSTC



ST ANNES RD, WILLENHALL
Two Bed Mid Terrace. Comprises Of Two Reception Rooms, Fitted Kitchen, First Floor Bathroom, Gas Central Heating, Detached Garage, Garden. Great First Time Buy Or Buy To Let. £70,000

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NEW
 Ready to view on the
 12th of July

- Stamping Way, Walsall
- Detached Four Bedroom Three Storey
 - Two Reception Rooms
 - Fitted Kitchen/Diner
 - Master Bedroom with En-Suite Shower Room
 - Three Further Bedrooms

Monthly Rental Of £850



NEW

- Woodbridge Close, Walsall
- Three Bedroom Completely Refurbished Semi Detached
 - Downstairs WC / Cloakroom
 - Large Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen and Bathroom

Monthly Rental Of £725.00



- Poole Crescent, Walsall
- Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
 - Entrance Porch/Hallway
 - Through Lounge/Dining Room
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Conservatory
 - Family Bathroom

Monthly Rental Of £675



- Hillside, Walsall
- Four Bedroom Detached Home
 - Large Lounge Diner
 - Fitted Breakfast Kitchen
 - Downstairs Bedroom With Ensuite
 - Well Maintained Gardens
 - Sorry No DHSS

Monthly Rental Of £675



- Kensington Road, Willenhall
- Three Bedroom Link Detached
 - Large Through Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
 - Garage
 - Off Road Parking
 - Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

Monthly Rental Of £575



NEW

- Milestone Way, Willenhall
- Two Bedroom Semi-Detached
 - Popular Coppice Farm Estate
 - Entrance Hall
 - Through Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen/Diner
 - Downstairs W.C.

Monthly Rental Of £575



NEW

- Bridge Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Semi-Detached
 - Entrance hall
 - Through Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom
 - Close to Schools

Monthly Rental Of £550



- Ingestre Close, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Terrace
 - Cul-de-Sac Location
 - Popular Turnberry Estate
 - Through Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom
 - Double Glazing
 - Electric Heating

Monthly Rental Of £525



- Brickyard Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Apartment
 - Popular Aldridge Location
 - Re Carpeted And Decorated Throughout
 - Modern Kitchen And Bathroom
 - Available Asap
 - Sorry No DHSS

Monthly Rental Of £525



- Blakenall Lane, Walsall
- Three Bedroom Terraced
 - Recently Refurbished
 - New Flooring Throughout
 - Two Reception Rooms
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - New Family Bathroom

Monthly Rental Of £500



- Glastonbury Crescent, Walsall
- Three Bedroom Semi - Detached
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom
 - Front and Rear Gardens
 - Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £495



- West Street, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Terraced
 - Very Well Presented
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Utility
 - Downstairs Bathroom
 - Rear Gardens

Monthly Rental Of £495



- Walker Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom FULLY FURNISHED
 - Ground Floor
 - Large Lounge
 - Kitchen with Appliances
 - Bathroom with Shower
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £495



- Abbey Square, Walsall
- Three Bedroom Terraced
 - Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom
 - Front and Rear Gardens
 - DHSS Accepted.

Monthly Rental Of £475



- Stafford Street, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Apartment
 - Ground Floor
 - New Build
 - Intercom Access
 - Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen
 - Master Bedroom En-Suite

Monthly Rental Of £475



- Bagnall Street, Walsall
- Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
 - Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Downstairs Toilet
 - Family Bathroom
 - Front & Rear Gardens

Monthly Rental Of £475



- Thornbury Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Ground Floor Apartment
 - Open Plan Lounge & Kitchen
 - Bathroom with Shower Over
 - Allocated Parking Space
 - Quiet Location
 - Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

Monthly Rental Of £460



- Walker Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom 1st Floor Apartment
 - Open Plan Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom & Ensuite
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £450.00



- Tintern Crescent, Walsall
- Three Bedroom Terraced House
 - Lounge
 - Newly Fitted Kitchen/Diner
 - Utility Area
 - Family Bathroom
 - DHSS Accepted, Sorry No Pets

Monthly Rental Of £450



- Terret Close, Walsall
- One Bedroom 2nd Floor Apartment
 - Open Plan Lounge / Kitchen
 - Bathroom with Shower over Bath
 - Hallway with Storage
 - Allocated Parking
 - Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

Monthly Rental Of £425



- Walker Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom 1st Floor Apartment
 - Open Plan Lounge & Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom
 - Entrance Hallway
 - Off Road Parking
 - Gas Central Heating

Monthly Rental Of £425



- Harden Close, Walsall
- Two Bedroom First Floor Flat
 - Private Entrance
 - Lounge
 - Newly Fitted Kitchen
 - Gas Central Heating & D, Glazing
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £425



- Gallery Square, Walsall
- One Bedroom First Floor Apartment
 - Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen
 - Shower Room
 - Town Centre Location
 - Close to all Transport Links
 - Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

Monthly Rental Of £425



- Leamore Lane, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Terraced House
 - Two Reception Rooms
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom
 - Rear Garden
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £425



- Cairns Street, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Terraced
 - Through Lounge
 - Above Retail Premises
 - Bloxwich High Street Location
 - Lounge/Kitchen
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £425



- Norton Road, Walsall
- ● NO REFERENCING FEES ●
 - Pelsall Village Centre
 - Large Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Bedroom
 - Bathroom

Monthly Rental Of £425



- Bloxwich Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
 - Private Entrance
 - Open Plan Lounge / Kitchen
 - Family Bathroom
 - Parking Space
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £400



- Bridge Street, Walsall
- One Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
 - Large Lounge
 - Fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
 - Secure Off Road Parking
 - Town Centre Location
 - Close to all transport links & amenities

Monthly Rental Of £400



- Stafford Street, Walsall
- One Bedroom Apartment
 - New Build
 - Top Floor
 - Intercom access
 - Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen
 - Shower Room

Monthly Rental Of £375



- High Street, Walsall
- One Bedroom First Floor Apartment
 - Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen
 - Bathroom with Shower
 - Allocated Parking
 - DHSS Accepted, Sorry No Pets.

Monthly Rental Of £375



- Harrison Street, Walsall
- One Bedroom First Floor Flat
 - Open Plan Kitchen & Lounge
 - Bedroom
 - Bathroom
 - Electric Heating
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £350



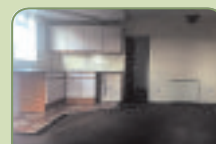
- The Exchange, Walsall
- First Floor One Bedroom Flat
 - Lounge
 - Bloxwich High Street Location
 - Lounge/Kitchen
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £350



- Moat Road, Walsall
- Two Bedroom Flat
 - Lounge
 - Kitchen
 - Shower Room & WC
 - Electric Heating
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £350



- Dartmouth Avenue, Walsall
- One Bedroomed Property
 - Fitted Kitchen
 - Bathroom
 - Lounge
 - Electric Heating
 - DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £325

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Monthly Rental Of £795



LET!

Woodall Street, Walsall

- Four Bed Detached
- Viewing Essential
- Through Lounge/Diner
- Guest W.C.
- Family Bathroom
- Shower Room

Monthly Rental Of £750



LET!

Astbury Close, Walsall

- Three Bedroom End of Terrace
- Completely Refurbished
- Entrance Hall/ Downstairs W.C.
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen/ Diner
- Family Bathroom

Monthly Rental Of £695




LET!

Kensington Road, Willenhall

- Three Bedroom Link Detached
- Large Through Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
- Garage
- Off Road Parking
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

Monthly Rental Of £575




LET!

Ogley Road, Walsall

- Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
- Entrance Hall/Lounge
- Dining Room
- Downstairs Shower Room
- New Fitted Kitchen
- New Family Bathroom

Monthly Rental Of £575



LET!

Somerfield Road, Walsall

- Three Bedroom End Terrace
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
- Large Rear Garden
- Block Paved Driveway
- DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £550



LET!

Mellish Road, Walsall

- Conveniently Located First Floor Apartment
- Within Walking Distance Of Walsall Town And Walsall Arboretum
- Refitted Kitchen And Bathroom
- Two Large Double Bedrooms

Monthly Rental Of £550



LET!

King George Crescent, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Semi-Detached
- Recently Refurbished
- New Flooring Throughout
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Separate Utility

Monthly Rental Of £525



LET!

Brickyard Road, Walsall

- Secure Gated Entrance
- Large Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms
- Modern Bathroom
- Sorry No DHSS

Monthly Rental Of £525




LET!

Springfields, Walsall

- Entrance Hall
- Guest Cloakroom
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Kitchen Diner
- Three Bedrooms
- Family Bathroom

Monthly Rental Of £510




LET!

Belper Road, Walsall

- Three Bedroom Terraced House
- Lounge
- Kitchen/Diner
- Family Bathroom
- Front and Rear Gardens
- DHSS Accepted, No Pets or Smokers

Monthly Rental Of £500



LET!

New Forest Road, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Semi-Detached
- Lounge
- Fitted Breakfast Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms
- Recently Fitted Bathroom
- Front & Rear Gardens

Monthly Rental Of £500



LET!

Valley Road, Walsall

- Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen/ Diner
- Downstairs W.C.
- Family Bathroom
- DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £495



LET!

Coalmeadow Close, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Semi - Detached
- Lounge
- Fitted Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- Front & Rear Gardens
- Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

Monthly Rental Of £495



LET!

Stafford Street, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Apartment
- Ground Floor
- New Build
- Intercom Access
- Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen
- Master Bedroom En-Suite

Monthly Rental Of £475




LET!

Walker Road, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Apartment
- Open Plan Lounge / Kitchen
- Bathroom with Shower
- Allocated Parking
- G.C Heating & D. Glazing
- DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £450




LET!

Cairns Street, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Terraced
- Two Reception Rooms
- Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- Rear Garden
- DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £425




LET!

Bloxwich Road, Walsall

- Two Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
- Private Entrance
- Open Plan Lounge / Kitchen
- Family Bathroom
- Parking Space
- DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £400



LET!

Marsh Street, Walsall

- Studio Apartment, Walsall Town Centre
- Separate Shower Room
- Fitted Kitchen
- Balcony with Canal Views
- Rear Garden
- Close to all amenities
- Sorry No DHSS.

Monthly Rental Of £350



LET!

Harrison Street, Walsall

- One Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
- Lounge
- Kitchen
- Bathroom
- Double Glazing & Electric Heating
- DHSS Accepted

Monthly Rental Of £350

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Blackthorne Road Walsall



Offers around £128,000

A three bedroom semi detached family home on a corner plot having the benefit of UPVC double glazing and gas central heating. The property further comprises, porch, reception hall, lounge, kitchen diner, guest W.C, three bedrooms, family bathroom, front and rear gardens and off road parking. Energy rating D.

Bentley Drive Walsall



Offers around £120,000

A superb, improved and upgraded two bedroom semi detached property having the benefit of UPVC double and gas central heating. This lovely well presented family home further comprises, lounge, dining room, refitted kitchen, refitted bathroom, two double bedrooms and front and rear gardens. Energy rating D.

Wolfsbane Drive Walsall



Offers around £99,995

A modern one bedroom middle terrace property in a sought after estate having the benefit of double glazing, gas central heating and no upward chain. This lovely property further comprises reception hall, fitted kitchen, lounge, double bedroom, bathroom with shower, front and rear gardens and off road parking. Energy rating C.

Hall Street Darlaston



Offers around £85,000

●●SUPERB MODERN FURNISHED APARTMENT THAT MUST BE VIEWED!!●● Located on the top floor this lovely apartment has the benefit of no upward chain, UPVC double glazing and electric central heating. The property further comprises, communal entrance with intercom, reception hall, modern open plan lounge/diner/kitchen (with washer dryer, fridge, over & hob). Two double bedrooms, bathroom with shower and communal parking space. Energy rating C

Montgomery Road Bentley



Offers around £116,995

A good size three bedroom family home having the benefit of UPVC double glazing, gas central heating and no upward chain. The property further comprises, porch, reception hall, through lounge, fitted kitchen, dining room, three bedrooms, family bathroom with shower, front and rear gardens, off road parking and garage. Energy rating D.

Cottage Lane Burntwood



Offers around £190,000

A rare opportunity to purchase a unique detached dormer bungalow with plenty of character and charm and having the benefit of UPVC double glazing and gas central heating. This splendid cottage is located in a quiet cul-de-sac and further comprises, reception hall, lounge, fitted kitchen diner, 2 x ground floor double bedrooms, family bathroom, utility room, 1st floor master bedroom with ensuite shower room, off road parking for several vehicles and detached double garage, good size rear garden with patio. Energy rating E.

Franchise Gardens Wednesbury



Offers around £80,000

A good size three bedroom middle terrace family home having the benefit of UPVC double glazing, gas central heating and no upward chain. The property further comprises, porch, reception hall, guest W.C, fitted breakfast kitchen, lounge, three bedrooms, family shower room, front and rear gardens, off road parking and separate garage. Energy rating D.



Mistletoe Drive Tamebridge



Offers around £110,000

A two bedroom end of terrace family home having the benefit of double glazing and gas central heating. Located in a sort after estate in a quiet cul-de-sac the property further comprises reception hall, lounge, fitted kitchen, two double bedrooms, family bathroom, front and rear gardens and two parking spaces. Energy rating D.

Laneside Gardens Walsall



Offers around £104,950

An improved, upgraded and refurbished three bedroom middle terrace family home having the benefit of UPVC double glazing, gas central heating and no upward chain. This well presented property further comprises, reception hall, lounge, refitted kitchen diner, guest W.C, 3 bedrooms, refitted bathroom, front and rear gardens. Internal viewing is a must to appreciate what the property has to offer. Energy rating D.

Pooles Lane Willenhall



Offers around £132,995

A good size three bedroom semi detached family home having the benefit of UPVC double glazing, gas central heating, fitted intruder alarm and no upward chain. This ideal family home further comprises, porch, reception hall, lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, family bathroom, 3 bedrooms, family bathroom with shower, spacious rear garden, off road parking for around 4-5 vehicles. Energy rating E.

Ryle Street Bloxwich



Offers around £99,995

A very well presented extended 3 bedroom semi detached family home with no upward chain. The property boasts an entrance porch, good sized living room, dining room, modern fitted kitchen, family bathroom on the ground floor and a modern shower room on the first floor. The property also benefits from gas central heating, double glazing, driveway and front and rear gardens. Energy rating C.



Market Square Wolverhampton



Offers around £69,995

●●Suit landlord or first time buyer (Previously let out for £450pcm)●● A well presented one bedroom modern City centre apartment located on the fourth floor and being in the heart of Wolverhampton City Centre with the benefit of no upward chain, security intercom and lift to the first floor, double glazing and electric central heating. The property further comprises, lounge, double bedroom, luxury bathroom with shower, fitted kitchen and secure allocated parking. EPC rating of C.

Ashmore Lake Road Willenhall



Offers around £109,995

A superb improved and upgraded two bedroom semi detached property having the benefit of UPVC double glazing and gas central heating. This lovely well presented family home further comprises, lounge, dining room, refitted kitchen, two double bedrooms, refitted bathroom, rear garden and off road parking to the front. Energy Rating E

Wolverhampton Street Willenhall



Offers around £115,950

A good sized three bedroom semi detached property having the benefit of UPVC double glazing and gas central heating. This well presented property further comprises, reception hall, lounge, dining room, fitted kitchen, family bathroom, 3 double bedrooms and front and rear garden. Energy rating E.

Darwin Road Bloxwich



Offers around £74,950

Notice Of Offer, 31 Darwin Road, Walsall, WS2 7EN. We advise that an offer has been made for the above property in the sum of £72,000. Any persons wishing to increase on this offer should notify the agents of their best offer prior to exchange of contracts. Redstones 75 George Street, Walsall, WS1 1RA, 01922 235350.

Caldmore Road Walsall



Offers around £75,000

A well presented two bedroom second floor modern apartment having the benefit of no upward chain, UPVC double glazing and gas central heating. This lovely property further comprises, reception hall, fitted kitchen, spacious lounge/diner, family bathroom with electric shower, two bedrooms, communal garden, intercom and allocated parking. Energy Rating B.

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COPPICE FARM LOCHALSH GROVE
 • Beautifully Maintained Detached Bungalow
 • Hall, Lounge, Breakfast Kitchen
 • Conservatory
 • Two Bedrooms, Shower Room



- Double Glazing
- Gas CH, Gardens
- Driveway
- Garage, No Chain

£225,000



COPPICE FARM LONG MYND CLOSE
 • Superb Modern Detached Property
 • Hall, Spacious Lounge
 • Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory
 • Three Bedrooms, Family Bathroom



- En-suite Shower Room
- Gas CH, Double Glazing
- Landscaped Rear Gardens
- Garage & Driveway

£189,950



WILLENHALL WILLIAMS CLOSE
 • Much Improved Semi Detached Property in Popular Location
 • Spacious L Shaped Lounge / Dining Room
 • Fitted Kitchen



- 3 Excellent Size Bedrooms,
- Bathroom
- Driveway, Garage
- Pleasant Gardens

£150,000



SHORT HEATH WALKERS FOLD
 • Modern 3 Bedroom Semi Detached Positioned On An Excellent Plot With Potential To Extend (STPP)
 • Lounge, Dining Room
 • Fitted Kitchen,



- Double Glazing
- Gas CH
- Driveway
- Pleasant Gardens

OFFERS OVER £129,995



BENTLEY ALEXANDER ROAD
 • Spacious Semi Detached Property
 • Hall, Lounge, Kitchen & Large Utility
 • Three Bedrooms, Bathroom
 • Double Glazing, Gas CH Rear Gardens

£119,950



WILLENHALL RUGELEY AVENUE
 • Much Improved 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
 • Hall, Lounge / Dining Room, Re-fitted Kitchen
 • Utility, Bathroom, Double Glazing, Gas CH
 • Driveway, Large Garden

OFFERS OVER £110,000



WILLENHALL BRICK KILN STREET
 • Well Presented Semi Detached Property
 • Hall, Lounge, Large Kitchen, G Floor Bathroom
 • Three Bedrooms, Gas Central Heating System
 • Double Glazing, Driveway, Rear Gardens

£109,950



NEW INVENTION SQUIRES GROVE
 • Well Presented Ground Floor Apartment:
 • Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms
 • Bathroom, En-suite Shower Room
 • Allocated Parking Space, No Chain

£100,000 (70% SHARE AVAILABLE)



HADLEY HEATH PACKWOOD CLOSE
 • Modern Town House Ideal For FTB Or Investors
 • Lounge, Re-fitted Kitchen, One Double Bedroom
 • Re-fitted Bathroom, Parking, Garden
 • Gas Central Heating System, Double Glazing

£80,000



WILLENHALL DOVEDALE AVENUE
 • This Property Is For Sale By The Modern Method Of Auction
 • 3 Bedroom Semi Detached with rear gardens
 • Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen

£69,950



ESSINGTON SNEYD LANE
 • Superb Four Bedroom Detached with Garage
 • Open plan lounge, dining room
 • Family room • Refitted breakfast kitchen
 • Bathroom • En-suite • D Glazing • Gas CH

£365,000



WILLENHALL MILL LANE
 • Detached Three Bedroom Bungalow on Corner Plot
 • Spacious Lounge • Kitchen • Luxury Bathroom
 • Side Annex with Lounge, Dining Kitchen, Bedroom & En-Suite

£270,000



ESSINGTON SNEYD LANE
 • Attractive Extended 4 Bedroom Semi Detached
 • Extended Lounge • Conservatory
 • Dining Room • Breakfast Kitchen • Gas CH
 • D Glaz • Large Driveway • Delightful Gardens

OFFERS OVER £230,000



WILLENHALL POOL HAYES LANE
 • Spacious Extended Detached • No Upward Chain
 • Through Lounge / Dining Room • Breakfast Kitchen
 • Sitting Room / Bedroom 4 • 3 Bedrooms
 • Bathroom • Driveway • Rear Gardens

£165,000



WILLENHALL ALVINGTON CLOSE
 • Improved 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
 • Lounge with Dining Area • Re-Fitted Kitchen
 • Double Glazing • Gas CH
 • Garage and Driveway • Pleasant Gardens

£139,950



NEW INVENTION DELAMERE ROAD
 • Improved Three Bedroom Semi Detached Property
 • Lounge & Conservatory • Dining Kitchen
 • Bathroom • Garage • Block Paved Driveway
 • Gas CH • Double Glazing • Rear Gardens

£139,950



PORTOBELLO MOUNT ROAD
 • Deceptively Spacious 3 Bedroom End Terrace
 • Lounge, Sitting Room, Spacious Fitted Kitchen
 • Loft Room, Large Bathroom, Rear Gardens
 • Gas Central Heating System, Double Glazing

£130,000



WILLENHALL COPPICE LANE
 • Traditional Bay Fronted Semi Detached
 • Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Utility
 • Three Good Size Bedrooms, Bathroom, Drive
 • Gas CH Majority D Glaz, Gardens, No Chain

£130,000



COUNTY BRIDGE CORONATION AVENUE
 • Stunning Beautifully Presented Semi Detached
 • Hall, Lounge
 • Superb Spacious Dining Kitchen

£115,000



- Three Bedrooms
- Excellent Re-fitted Bathroom
- Pleasant Rear Gardens
- Block Paved Driveway

£127,000



COUNTY BRIDGE DEVON ROAD
 • Improved Traditional Bay Fronted Semi Detached
 • Hall, Lounge, Excellent Dining Kitchen
 • Three Bedrooms, Re-fitted Shower Room
 • Garage, Driveway, Rear Gardens, No Chain

£123,950



WILLENHALL WOLVERHAMPTON RD WEST
 • Superb Modern Style 3 Bedroom Semi Detached
 • Hall • Lounge • Dining Kitchen
 • Re-Fitted Bathroom • Double Glazing • Gas CH
 • Two Allocated Parking Spaces • Gardens

£125,000



SNEYD PARK DRUID PARK ROAD
 • Well Appointed Semi Detached Property
 • Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory
 • Two Double Bedrooms, Shower Room,
 • Garage, Driveway, Rear Gardens, No Chain

£125,000



WILLENHALL SPINDLE TREE RISE
 • Imprecably Appointed Modern End Terrace
 • Hall • Guests Wc, Lounge, Impressive Kitchen
 • Excellent Conservatory, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom
 • Double Width Driveway, Gardens, Gas CH, D Glaz

OFFERS OVER £120,000



WILLENHALL HODSON AVENUE
 • Much Improved 3 Bedrooms Semi Detached
 • Hall, Lounge, Impressive Dining Kitchen • No Chain
 • Bathroom, Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating
 • Block Paved Driveway, Pleasant Rear Gardens

£115,000



BENTLEY CHURCHILL ROAD
 • Semi Detached Property with No Chain
 • Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen,
 • Three Bedrooms, Bathroom & Separate Wc,
 • Rear Gardens • Gas CH • Double Glazing

£110,000



WILLENHALL CADNAM CLOSE
 • Modern Style 3 Bedroom Detached Property
 • Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Fitted Kitchen
 • Bathroom, Double Glazing • Gas CH
 • Garage, Driveway, Front And Rear Gardens

£127,000



ESSINGTON HUGH WAY
 • Superb First Floor Apartment • Premier Location
 • Reception Hall • Lounge • Fitted Kitchen
 • Two Bedrooms • Bathroom
 • Double Glazing • Allocated Parking Space

£105,000



SHORT HEATH BENTLEY LANE
 • Superb 2 Bedrooms Second Floor Apartment:
 • Excellent Open Plan Dining Room Fitted Kitchen
 • Lounge • Bathroom • Double Glazing, Gas CH
 • Allocated Parking Space

£103,000



WILLENHALL CLOTHIER STREET
 • Renovated 3 Bedroom Mid Terrace Property
 • Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Ground Floor Bathroom
 • Double Glazing, Gas Central Heating System
 • Rear Gardens, No Upward Chain

£100,000



COPPICE FARM COTSWOLD GROVE
 • Much Improved 2 Bedrooms Mid Terrace Bungalow
 • Development For Over 55's • No Chain
 • Lounge, Newly Fitted Kitchen, Conservatory
 • Bathroom, D Glazing, Communal Gardens

£100,000



SHORT HEATH CHAUCER AVENUE
 • Spacious Two Bedroom Mid Terrace Property
 • Through Lounge / Dining Room • Fitted Kitchen
 • Bathroom • Gas Central Heating System
 • Double Glazing • Front & Rear Gardens

£88,000



WILLENHALL WELLINGTON PLACE
 • Well Appointed First Floor Duplex Maisonette
 • Allocated Parking Spaces
 • Lounge with Dining Area • Large Bedroom
 • Fitted Kitchen • Bathroom • Double Glazing

OFFERS OVER £85,000



WILLENHALL CLARKES LANE
 • First Floor Two Bedrooms Apartment:
 • Hall, Lounge With Dining Area, Fitted Kitchen
 • Bathroom, Allocated Parking Space
 • Double Glazing, Gas CH, No Upward Chain

OFFERS OVER £80,000

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Green Lanes Bilston



• Three Bedroom
• Kitchen
• Lounge
• EPC - D, Dining room
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£117,000**

Green Park Avenue Bilston



• 3 bedroom flat
• Immaculate condition
• Modern bathroom
• EPC - G, Double glazing
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£65,000**

Langley Avenue Bilston



• No Chain
• Needs Refurbishment
• Terraced
• EPC D, 3 Bedrooms
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£80,000**

Loxdale Sidings Bilston



• 1 Bedroom modern flat
• No upward chain
• Lounge
• EPC - D, 1 Bedroom
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£57,950**

Merstone Close Bilston



• Mid Terrace Residence
• UPVc Double Glazing
• Entrance
• EPC Rating TBC, Lounge
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£85,000**

Broadmoor Close Bilston



• 3 Bedroom detached house
• Immaculate condition
• Entrance porch and hallway
• Lounge/diner
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£135,000**

Pool Hayes Lane Willenhall



• 3 Bedroom detached house
• Refurbished
• No upward chain
• Downstairs wc
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£169,950**

Grenville Close Walsall



• Ground Floor Maisonette
• CASH OFFERS ONLY
• Entrance
• EPC Rating E, Lounge
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£45,000**

Finchfield Lane Wolverhampton



• Traditional Semi Detached Residence with No Upward Chain
• UPVc Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating
• Entrance Porch • Reception Hallway
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£225,000**

Clary Grove Walsall



• Modern End Terrace Residence in a cul de sac location
• UPVc Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating
• No Upward Chain
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£129,950**

Chepstow Road Walsall



• Middle Terrace Residence requiring upgrading
• Gas Central Heating
• Porch • Reception Hall
• EPC Rating D, Lounge
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£64,000**

Lichfield Road Walsall



• Period Semi Detached Residence
• Spacious Family Accommodation
• Gas Central Heating & Majority Double Glazing
• EPC Rating C, Vestibule & Reception Hall
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£245,000**

Rowan Road Walsall



• Extended Semi Detached Property
• Four Bedrooms With En-suite To Master
• Two Reception Rooms
• Good Size Enclosed Rear Garden, Kitchen & Utility
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£225,000**

Leighton Road Bilston



• 3 Bedroom semi detached house
• No upward chain
• Lounge
• Kitchen/diner
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£80,000**

Langley Avenue Bilston



• Charming 2 bedroom terraced house
• Driveway
• Lounge
• EPC - D, Kitchen/Diner
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£105,000**

Mickley Avenue Wolverhampton



• Modern Executive Detached Residence in a cul de sac location
• Located in the sought after location of Fallings Park
• UPVc Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£220,000**

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Darley Drive Wolverhampton



• Modern 3 bedroom detached house
• Lounge
• Dining room
• Conservatory
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£150,000**

Gough Street Willenhall



• Semi Detached Residence with No Upward Chain
• Good Size Corner Plot
• UPVc Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating
• EPC Rating E, Entrance
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£80,000**

Biddlestone Grove Walsall



• Modern End Terrace with further potential for extensions (subject to planning permission)
• No Upward Chain
• Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£119,950**

Clary Grove Walsall



• Mid Terrace Residence in a cul de sac location
• Double Glazing & Electric Heating
• Reception Hall
• EPC Rating D, Lounge
OFFERS AROUND:
Viewing: **£109,950**



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Insignia, is it back to the front?

By James Parker

Vauxhall's Insignia is now the complete car it should always have been.

With smarter looks, a classier cabin, hi-tech features and a more efficient engine range, the improved first generation version of Vauxhall's Insignia has now enhanced its already impressive CV for success in the medium range Mondeo sector. More than ever, it's a model you really can't afford to overlook.

Welcome to Britain's best selling traditional family car. Yes, you heard that right. That title belongs not to the kind of family models that make the headlines – fashionable Cross-overs, practical People Carriers or sleeky SUVs – but to this one, Vauxhall's Insignia.

Launched in 2008 as a more stylish replacement for the uninspiring Vectra, this model was instantly well received, carrying off the coveted 2009 Car of the Year title and racking up impressive sales at the same time as other mainstream brands were struggling.

This improved model has had a thorough chassis update tested on proper bumpy British roads, with a redesigned rear suspension system to improve ride comfort and a steering calibration refreshment that's brought a more direct feel through the corners. And both of those issues can be further improved if you tick the extra-cost box for the FlexRide adaptive damping system.

Almost all Insignia buyers want a diesel and though the original version of Vauxhall's 2.0 CDTi unit had many merits, refinement wasn't one of them. In fact, it was one of the noisiest, rattliest diesels in its class. But isn't now. You feel that primarily with this unit in its latest 170PS 'Whisper diesel' guise, but the older-tech 120 and 140PS ecoFLEX units are also an improvement on older Vauxhall oil burners. The 195PS 2.0 BiTurbo diesel continues on at the top of the range. In the petrol line-up, there's also a cheap old-tech engine choice – the 140PS 1.8i unit – but again, more emphasis is being put on the modern turbo powerplant offerings, the 140PS 1.4T, the 170PS 1.6 SIDI and the 250PS 2.0 SIDI. At the top of the range, a 325PS 2.0 V6 continues in the VXR SuperSports model. This VXR has 4WD but the only other model in the range that gets it is the Country Tourer estate version which, with its raised ride height, aims to offer an SUV alternative.

Bodystyles

Outside, there are detail improvements front and rear that aim to bring a wider and lower look to the hatch, saloon and Sports Tourer estate bodystyles that, as before, make up the range. And inside? Well it feels a great deal more up to date, with many of the previously scattered and confusing little buttons tidied up onto a (sadly optional) central 8-inch colour touchscreen that deals with everything from navigation to audio selections, Bluetooth 'phone functions to a series of Vauxhall-sourced apps.

Out back, the hatch most choose offers a 530-litre boot – with 540-litres on offer in the Sports Tourer estate.

In theory, Insignia pricing covers a very wide span – anywhere between £17,000 and £33,000. In practice, almost all Insignia sales are concentrated in the £17,000 to £22,000 bracket, with most of those going to business buyers who usually want one of the 2.0-litre CDTi diesel variants. Paying much more than that for this car takes it into the BMW 3 Series-dominated compact executive saloon bracket where mainstream makers usually struggle. Talking of saloons, there's is a four-door Insignia saloon bodystyle as a no-cost option to the more familiar five-door hatch, but it comes with a much smaller range of trim and engine choices.

For my test, I chose the Sports Tourer estate bodystyle, which is offered at a premium of around £1,500 over an equivalent hatch. Unlike the mainstream models of the other bodystyles, this one can be had with 4WD but to get it, you have to stretch up to a top of the range Country Tourer version priced in the £25,000 to £30,000 bracket and aiming to snare RAV4 and Freelander folk who'd normally be looking at a compact SUV. The other key variant worthy of mention is the flagship VXR SuperSports model which has a potentially thirsty petrol V6 but offers more performance for a £30,000 budget than you'll get almost anywhere else.

Around 85 per cent of Insignia buyers go for a diesel – and you can see why. Both 120 and 140PS versions of the 2.0 CDTi ecoFLEX model return 76.3mpg on the combined cycle and put out just 98g/km of CO2, returns that at launch were comfortably class-leading. Go for the extra performance of the 2.0 CDTi 170PS variant and there's not a huge price to pay at the pumps. This variant will deliver 65.7mpg on the combined cycle.

Thinking of buying a petrol-powered Insignia? If you're a lower mileage driver, perhaps the prospect might be worthy of a thought or two. The brand's current generation of turbo petrol units all do better than you'd expect on the balance sheet: the 140PS 1.4T manages 54.3mpg and 123g/km, the 170PS 1.6 SIDI delivers 47.9mpg and 139g/km and the 250PS 2.0 SIDI returns 39.2mpg and 169g/km.

This car isn't completely new – but it feels that way behind the wheel thanks to all the fresh cabin infotainment and the higher quality feel. Those that are tempted by the shinier prospects of newer rivals will, Vauxhall hopes, be brought back into the Insignia fold by class-leading running costs.



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63 Corsa 1.4 SXI 3dr, 17" alloys, A/C, Cruise control, 17000 miles, White..... **£7499**
63 Corsa 1.4 SXI 3dr, Cruise control, A/C, Alloys, 18700 miles, Pepperdust..... **£6999**
62 Corsa 1.4 Active 3dr, A/C, Bluetooth, Alloys, 19000 miles, Pepperdust..... **£7799**
63 Corsa 1.2 Energy 5dr, A/C, Bluetooth, Alloys, 8000 miles, Pepperdust..... **£7999**
64 Corsa 1.2 Energy 3dr, 16" alloys, A/C, Bluetooth, 17000 miles, Silver..... **£7999**
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ASTRA

from **£7999**

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12 Astra 1.6 Exclusiv 5dr, A/C, Cruise control, Parking sensors, 37300 miles, White..... **£8999**
62 Astra 1.6 Active 5dr, Alloys, A/C, Bluetooth, 15900 miles, White..... **£9499**
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‘Hypermiling’ – going the extra mile to cut down your fuel bills

Hypermiling is a controversial method of saving fuel, but is there anything it can teach the average driver about cutting fuel bills?

We all like to get something for nothing when it comes to our cars' running costs, so anything that delivers more miles per gallon has to be welcome. Enthusiasts for an extreme form of fuel saving known as 'hypermiling' use every trick in the book to slash their fuel bills, often making normal cars travel extraordinary distances on a tank of petrol.

Some of the techniques used by hypermiling fans can be employed by normal drivers with little or no difference to their driving or journey times. Others, however, require much more caution as they could put you or other drivers at risk. As with all driving, you must be safe.

● One of the first techniques used by hypermilers is to keep an accurate record of their mileage and fuel used. This lets them assess just how economically they are driving and where they might be able to save fuel. You can download fuel calculators to your computer or smartphone to help with this.

● Another simple tip we can all use is to keep our cars properly serviced. A well-maintained car is up to 10% more efficient than one that has been allowed to fester in its old oil.

● Reducing weight is free and gains performance and economy, so take out all of the clutter from your car. Those golf clubs that sit in there and are only used on Saturday morning? Remove them after your round of golf and enjoy better fuel consumption.

● At low speeds, it makes more sense to open a window or sunroof to let in fresh air than run the air conditioning. However, once out of town, close the windows and use the air con if it's hot, as it uses less of the engine's power at higher speeds.



● As you drive along, try to read the road more carefully to avoid the need to slow down or use the brakes so much. By easing off the throttle pedal, you are saving fuel and letting the engine gently slow the car, which also saves wear on the brakes. By not using the brakes so much and going with the flow, you will be stationary for less time and that means using less energy to regain speed.

● Some hypermilers 'coast' by taking the car out of gear on downhill stretches. However, this lessens the control you have over the car is not recommended.

● Nor is it wise to get too close to the car or truck in front to try to benefit from the aerodynam-

ic hole they punch in the air. While this might work for Formula One drivers when overtaking, it's just too dangerous on the road and many hypermilers avoid this extreme technique too.

● Lastly, try slowing down a little. The difference between driving at 50mph and 60mph may only be 10mph, but your car uses around 20% more fuel to achieve the higher speed.

Given the congested nature of many roads, driving at the lower speed will have no effect on your journey time.

Put all of these simple techniques together and hypermiling fans reckon you can boost fuel economy by up to 40%. Now that is a something worth having for nothing.

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Bradshaw fit again and aiming for promotion

STAR striker Tom Bradshaw insists his injury woes are behind him as he bids to fire Walsall into the Championship.

The 22-year-old frontman delighted Saddlers fans this week by signing a contract extension that ties him to the Banks's Stadium until June 2017.

Bradshaw scored 20 goals in 37 games for Dean Smith's side last season despite missing large chunks of the campaign with niggling hamstring problems.

But the Wales under-21 star believes those troubles are now behind him after hitting the gym in the off season.

"I've done countless things over the summer that will hopefully pay dividends once the season starts," Bradshaw said.

"The hamstrings were an issue last season. But I was given a great routine by the coaching staff in terms of strengthening and making my hamstrings more flexible.

"I'm also now wearing an insole in my shoe which helps to correct the unevenness in the length of my legs.

"I'm a big believer in putting in hard work even in the summer period. If you do the work then, the pre-season shouldn't be too much of shock and that's the reason for these off-season schedules.

"I know I have worked hard and I'm sure the rest of the lads have too."

With his future resolved, Bradshaw is now targeting a promotion push for the 2015/16 campaign, believing there is no reason why the Saddlers can't finish inside the play-off zone. "There is so much potential for us to be attacking the play-offs," he said.

Trophy cost the Saddlers, says Purkiss

WALSALL'S run to the Johnstone's Paint Trophy final did affect their league form last season, former defender Ben Purkiss believes.

The 31-year-old, one of four players released by boss Dean Smith at the end of the campaign, signed a two-year deal with League One rivals Port Vale yesterday.

And upon signing for The Valiants he admitted the cup run, while exciting, did hamper Walsall's league form.

"The cup run was fantastic but I do feel it took a bit away from our league form," he said.

"But to play at Wembley was brilliant and the supporters were unbelievable."

Purkiss made 39 appearances for the Saddlers last year and also claimed the club's Community Player of the Season award.

But he was deemed surplus to requirements by Smith who also released Mal Benning, Jake Heath and Ashley Grimes.

Thorn and Johnson join the Baggies

ALBION have appointed former Coventry boss Andy Thorn and ex-Liverpool and Tottenham talent-spotter Mel Johnson as part of a scouting shake-up.

The pair have helped the Baggies finalise their transfer shortlist for this summer.

Thorn, who also had a brief spell as Kidderminster Harriers manager, has been given the task of monitoring targets in the north of England.

And Johnson, who helped Tottenham assess Gareth Bale before his move from Southampton, is looking after the south of the country. The duo are reporting to head of recruitment Mervyn Day and have already played key role in the Baggies' summer plans.

They have effectively replaced Tony Sparling and Stuart White.

Luke looks to make his own luck

BLOXWICH'S Luke Paddock will be hoping to make his own luck from when he returns to the ring at Walsall Town Hall on Saturday night, *writes Craig Birch*.

Had it not been for misfortune, the Midlands light welterweight champion would've had no luck at all so far in 2015.

All year the unbeaten 23-year-old has been trying to defend the title he won last December, outpointing Josh McLaren convincingly away from home.

First Paddock was due to put the belt up-for-grabs against Newark's Fergus Taylor in March, only for his opponent to be ruled out on medical grounds by the British Boxing Board of Control.

Then the board made Aston's Chris Truman – who was due to meet Paddock for the vacant crown last year but pulled out injured – his mandatory challenger.

Truman cried off again with a shoulder problem so in came old amateur rival Andy Keates, from Leek, as a match for Wolverhampton Civic Hall on June 6.

It looked as if Paddock was finally going to become a fighting champion which, if successful, would be half of the job done towards winning the strap outright.

But then he was laid low by a norovirus himself, so was forced to withdraw. He's hoping his battle for the belt will now come at Walsall Football Club's

Banks's Stadium this autumn. Keates – who won three to Paddock's two in unpaid bouts between the pair – is a score to be settled, while Newark's Adam Kettleborough and Brummie Marcus Ffrench are also in the frame.

Paddock said: "It's been frustrating for me, when all I want to do is fight, and I'd have already had the belt for my own if things had been different.

"I was hoping to have defended the belt twice by now, I believe I am passing that level and want to be pushing towards the English and British titles.

Tickets, are £30 and £60 ringside, and available from the Town Hall Box Office on 0845 111 2900.

Dan hopes to breeze in with his sixth win

BLOXWICH'S Daniel Breeze might not feel that much at home when he competes on his own turf on Saturday night, writes Craig Birch.

The teenage welterweight will be hoping to make it six of the best as a paid fighter, with his first appearance as a pro boxing on his home turf.

The 19-year-old has reeled off five points wins since turning over last year, after winning three national titles as an amateur for Walsall Wood Boxing Club.

Four of those victories have come in Birmingham, with three on Tommy Owens' shows in Aston Villa's Holte Suite and his last bout on the televised Matchroom bill at the Barclaycard Arena.

'The Hurricane' also featured on a joint Paul 'PJ' Rowson-BoxNation card at Wolverhampton Civic Hall, the nearest he has come to a home fight.

And the popular prospect, whose pro gym is under trainer and coach Jon Pegg in Birmingham, is looking forward to bring his band of fans home.

Support

He said: "It's only 10 minutes away from my house.

"This one is for the people who support me, really, as they have been travelling over to Birmingham for the most part.

"It might feel a little weird for me, actually, as I have got so used to boxing away, but I'm really looking forward to it.

"I have actually competed at the Town Hall before, it must have been 10 years ago when I was kickboxing. I'd have only been nine or 10, at the time.

"I'm expecting a good night, it's my last fight until the autumn and I want to go out with a bang."

Breeze has been paired with York's Dean Croft over four rounds, as the search for his first stoppage continues.

He feels that the knockouts will come as he grows into being a pro, which he reckons is coming on all of the time in training.

He said: "I'm a counter puncher but the opponents I've had so far haven't tried to attack me, which negates that.

"I think the better the opponent, the more you will see from me. Until then, I've got to become more aggressive in the ring.

"I need to trust in my fitness, too, and be a bit



Bloxwich boxer Dan Breeze will be fighting Dean Croft in his home town of Walsall on Saturday

busier in most departments. If I can do that, you'll see the results."

Fellow Bloxwich boxer Luke Paddock, the Midlands light welterweight champion, is also on the card as is Essington's Ben Wilkes.

Fellow light middle Craig Morris, from Ludlow in Shropshire, also features. Super middle Carl Dickens, from Redditch, will be looking to bounce back from his first pro defeat.

Two debutants complete the card in big heavyweight Martin Gordon, from Dudley, and West Bromwich's Jack Summers, who turns over at super feather.

Infitting with Independence Day, there will be a range of American inspired food and drinks available on the night.

Tickets, priced at £30 and £60 ringside, are available from the Town Hall Box Office on 0845 111 2900.

Ben called up to fight for country

Boxing

as he keeps progressing in the amateur code. The next step is the Commonwealth, which begins on September 5 with the England fighters first heading to New Zealand on August 26, for a training camp to acclimatise.

In the meantime, he's training three times a day out of uncle Joby Clayton's Firewalker gym, at Wodensborough in the evenings and with his dad Tony Wilson at home.

Jinx

He said: "I didn't want to jinx it by telling anyone but I thought, with all of the hard work that I had put in, I had to be a part of the squad.

"I did worry slightly when I lost in the final of the Three Nations, but I beat the European champion (Scotland's Willie Hutchinson) in the semis.

"The lad in the final (fellow Englishman Zak Chelli) was one of my mates who I had beaten before. To be honest, I switched off thinking it was going to be easy. I won't be doing that again.

"I've really started to get my name out there this

year and we've had another selection camp since then. We all knew it was our last chance to impress, so every spar was like a fight.

"I am looking forward to working with the coaches, Paul Bennett and Mick Driscoll, and it's exciting to think what an experience it will be. Not many people can say they've boxed in Samoa.

"Ultimately, my dream is the Olympics. I think I would be at the perfect age when Tokyo comes around, but a lot of things have to happen before I get picked.

"For a start, I need to go to the Commonwealth Youth Games and come back with that gold medal. I'm not going there just to see the sights."

Whittaker got the Chelli defeat out of his system and put rounds in the bank last weekend, with success at the annual Haringey Box Cup.

Europe's largest international open event attracted 391 boxers this year to the Alexandra Palace, with the London Live cameras on hand.

Whittaker boxed twice in two days and first saw off Terry Conroy, before downing Lewis Richardson in the final to take home the belt.

He said: "They were good tests. Both decisions were unanimous.

Saddlers want new loan deal for Hiwula

WALSALL boss Dean Smith wants to bring Jordy Hiwula back to the club but believes any potential deal will have to wait until later in the summer.

The talented winger impressed during a three-month stay at the Banks's last season, scoring nine goals in 17 appearances during a loan switch from Manchester City.

The 20-year-old is expected to leave the Etihad on a temporary basis again this summer, but Smith believes City boss Manuel Pellegrini will want to take a closer look at him during their pre-season preparations. "I would like to bring Jordy back, he did really well for us and he is a smashing kid as well," Smith said.

"But he is a Manchester City player so they will have to decide what they want to do with him. They'll have a look at him over pre-season but he certainly ticked all the boxes for us in terms of character, type of player and mentality. City were also very happy with his development here.

"Ideally I'm looking to get all my players signed in time for the start of pre-season on July 1.

"But if I want to bring someone in from a Premier League team on a season long loan I'm going to have to wait until a little bit later in the window.

"They finished later and they are starting back up later so a deal like that may have to wait just a few weeks."

Meanwhile, Smith has played down speculation linking him with a move for former Saddlers favourite Milan Lalković. The creative schemer, under contract at Barnsley, impressed during a loan spell at the Banks's in 2013/14.

Pelsall move closer to a spot at Lord's

PELSALL moved a step closer to Lord's after thrashing Weekley & Warkton in the fifth round of the Davidstow National Village Cup.

Danny Pennell's side defeated the Northamptonshire League Division One side by nine wickets to go within three games of a final at the home of English cricket.

Now they will travel to play fellow Birmingham League Division Three side Astwood Bank in 13 days' time in the last 16 after the Redditch side beat Leicestershire outfit Newton Linford by five wickets. Pelsall shot out their hosts for just 77 in 25 overs of the scheduled 40-over game with seamer Stephen Blews taking the honours with 5-37, and fellow pacemen Pennell (2-20 off six) and Todd Henderson (2-11 off eight) also starring.

In reply, Pelsall reached their target for the loss of one wicket in just 12 overs. Richard Marsh top-scored with 43 and Paul Grainger and Henderson steered Pelsall home with unbeaten totals of 11 and six. The sixth round is on July 12.

Legzdin is keen to work with Rowett

ADAM LEGZDINS admits the chance to work again with Gary Rowett was a key factor behind his decision to join Blues.

The Penkridge-born keeper has signed a two-year deal at St Andrew's with a further year's option in the club's favour.

The 28-year-old is a product of Blues' academy and previously left the club in 2008 to join Crewe Alexandra.

But he is delighted to be reunited with Blues boss Rowett, who was assistant and then manager during Legzdins' time at Burton Albion. "It's great to be back and seeing some old faces. I'm very excited," said Legzdins.

"Driving up to the training ground you get a bit of nostalgia and memories coming back."

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The Chinese take away Ba for £11.3m

ALBION have been forced to move on to other targets after Demba Ba signed a lucrative deal to play in the Chinese Super League.

The Senegal international is reported to have signed a three-year contract worth £11.3m with Shanghai Shenhua in a deal thought to be a record for the league.

The Baggies had been in talks with representatives of the 30-year-old Besiktas striker right up until Saturday and were said to be shocked to see the former Chelsea, West Ham and Newcastle player then opt to play in China.

But it's understood Ba has been persuaded by the riches on offer after agreeing a contract worth an estimated £130,000-a-week with a much lower tax rate on offer in the Far East.

The wages more than double what Albion were prepared to offer.

The Ba fee would eclipse the previous CSL record of £10.6m paid in January by champions Guangzhou Evergrande for Ricardo Goulart.

Ba, who underwent a medical yesterday, made the switch to China from Turkey, where he scored 27 goals in 44 games last season.

Ba joins a big-name cast list of strikers to have played for Shanghai, following Ivory Coast veteran Drogba - Ba's former team-mate at Stamford Bridge - and ex-Albion and Chelsea striker Nicolas Anelka.

Meanwhile, reports linking Albion with a £4m move for Middlesbrough left back George Friend are wide of the mark, according to sources at the club.

The Baggies have an interest in the 27-year-old one-time Wolves defender, who was linked with Crystal Palace last summer when Albion boss Tony Pulis was in charge at Selhurst Park.

Skipper Delph has get out clause in his deal with Villa

VILLA could lose skipper and player of the year Fabian Delph for a knockdown price this summer.

Reports suggest Delph, who signed a new four-and-a-half year deal at Villa Park midway through last season, had a release fee clause inserted into the deal.

That is understood to be somewhere in the region of £8m-10m.

Manchester City have been linked with the midfielder who has also become a fixture in the England side under Roy Hodgson.

It was reported that Delph agreed the clause with Villa owner Randy Lerner as part of the negotiations over his new deal.

It is understood the clause relates only to clubs who are involved in European competition and that would include both City and Liverpool, who have both been admirers of the tough-tackling 25-year-old.

Meanwhile, Villa have been linked with Tottenham's young defender Milos Veljkovic.

Boss Tim Sherwood is believed to be interested in a loan deal for him.

Smith looking for up to five more

WALSALL boss Dean Smith has confirmed he is looking to sign four - possibly five - players in the summer transfer window.

The Saddlers are one of only a handful of teams in League One yet to add to their ranks over the close season, despite Smith revealing last week he is close to bringing in a goalkeeper and a forward.

It means Tom Bradshaw signing a contract extension has been the only piece of news Walsall fans have been able to celebrate so far. But Smith is pleased things are quieter now compared with this time last year.

"We only need four or five signings so we're busy, but it's been a bit more relaxing than last

Football

year," the boss said. "It's been really good because it's given me time to meet players and have a really good chat with them to make sure they are the right people for the club.

"In the past my time has been taken up chasing too many players. This year we can hand pick the ones we go for, because we don't need wholesale changes.

"We just need that extra quality that will push us up the table. It's been easier and the planning is going really well.

"Everyone knows we have one of the lowest budgets in the league so it's important you take that time. It's not money that makes you successful, it's having a good philosophy, with good people and a good team spirit.

"We need everyone working together so I have to make sure we get the right ones in."

Smith also feels fans will see big improvements from players such as Reece Flanagan, Liam Kinsella, Jordan Murphy, Rico Henry and Matt Preston, who all made their full Saddlers debuts last season.

"We have got a lot of young players that have now tasted first-team action," Smith said.

Chambers may leave Saddlers

JAMES Chambers' Walsall career could be over after boss Dean Smith revealed the defender is pursuing interests outside of football.

The 34-year-old, whose contract with the Saddlers expired this week, is debating whether or not to hang up his boots despite the offer of a one-year extension on the table.

James' decision won't impact the future of twin brother Adam though, with the Saddlers captain penning a new one-year deal with Dean Smith's side on Monday afternoon.

"The situation with James Chambers is a strange one," Smith said.

"Adam has agreed his deal but James has got an interest away from football and that has deterred him from signing.

"I've told James the club can't just be sitting around waiting for him, we have to move forward.

"It's still an ongoing thing but it means now I'm out there looking for another centre-back."

Despite James' future being uncertain, Smith is delighted to have retained the services of Adam who has made more than 180 appearances for the Saddlers since signing from Leyton Orient in the summer of 2011.

"I'm delighted that Adam has agreed to extend his stay with us," Smith said.

"It was never in any doubt. The only reason it has taken so long is that our holidays meant that we kept missing each other.

"Adam and I go back a long way, the type of player and person he is fits perfectly into the way we try to do things here.

"He's fully committed to the cause and leads by example. He has a phenomenal work ethic, something which the other lads can only learn from.

"He has been a big influence here."

Signings will fine tune, says Jackett

WOLVES fans should not expect a glut of signings this summer, according to boss Kenny Jackett.

It will mostly likely be evolution rather than revolution as Jackett and recruitment chief Kevin Thelwell fine tune a squad that finished a whisker outside the Championship play-offs.

And Jackett tempered fans' expectations of many more following the pair through the Molineux door.

"If we can add players that will improve or complement our squad we'll do that," Jackett said.

"I wouldn't suggest there will be high numbers of players coming in."

Jackett backs Wallace to fit in



Jed Wallace, signed from Portsmouth, is one of two new summer arrivals at Molineux

NEW Wolves signing Jed Wallace is ready for Championship football, head coach Kenny Jackett believes.

Wallace, aged 21, joined Wolves last month from League Two side Portsmouth, where he made 110 league appearances in three seasons, scoring 27 goals.

And the midfielder is being lined up to go straight into Jackett's first-team plans.

Wallace can play wide or behind the striker in an advanced midfield role and Jackett spoke of his delight at adding the former England Under-19 international to his options.

"We were really pleased to bring Jed Wallace in - he's a player we followed and at 21-years-

old is someone that has good league experience," Jackett said.

"He has played a number of league games, scored some goals in League Two last year and I think he's ready for the step up to the Championship.

"We're pleased to add him as he's a player that's quite flexible in terms of positions - he can play wide, he can also play centrally behind the striker.

"It brings options to the group and some freshness, so we're pleased to add him."

Wolves have also brought in defender Sylvain Deslandes from French side Caen, who will go into the under-21 squad.

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